An Inuectyue agenſt the mooſt wicked & deteſtable vyce of ſwearing, newly cõpiled by Theodoze Baſille.

Eccl. 23.

A man þ vſeth muche ſwearing, ſhall be fylled wt wyckednes, and þ plage, þ is to ſay, þ vẽgeance of god ſhall not go away frõ his houſe.

¶ The Inuectyue speakethe.

LAmentably do I nowe procede
Of myn Author sent at this season
In a sadde and lamentable wede
To make my complaynte & lamentacion.

Lament I must bothe daye and nyghte
To beholde the greate abhominacion
Whych thorow swearyng in all mennes syghte
Is now vsed wythout lamentacion.

Lament all christen hartes do I am sure
To heare God and hys creatures ethe one
So wyth dly blaspheme wythout cure
And yet no man maketh lamentacion.

Lament o ye Swearers, lament, lament
And looke ye cease from thys great abusion,
ffor yf to do thus ye be not now bent
In hell shall ye make full sore lamentacion.

Lament your synnes, & take me to you
ffor to leaue your great abhominacion
I wyll teache you, yea & all thyng true
That ye maye be free from lamentacion.

Lament yf ye wyll not in hel fyre
But entoye the diuine fruicion,
Looke that ye accomplyshe my desyre
So shall ye be free from lamentacion.

To the right worshypfull Master Rycharde Skotte Theodore Basille wysheth lōge lyfe cōtinual helth, and prosperous felicitie.

✠

GOD the father saythe by hys Prophete, Crye cease not. Lyfte vp thy voyce as a trompe, and shew to the people theyr wickednes, and to ẏ house of Jacob theyesynnes. That this is chefelye spoken to them that are Prechers & Ministers of Gods worde, Ther is no mā that is but meanely learned, ignoraunt therof. For it is theyr dutye to crye & not to cease. It is theyr dutye to exalte & lyft vp theyr voyce as a trōpe. It is theyr duty to shew vnto the people theyr wyckednesses & synnes. It is theyr duty to preach

Esa. viii.

the Gospel to euery creature. It is
Mat. xxviii. theyr duty to preach Repentaunce
& remission of synnes in the name of
Christ vnto al nacions. It is theyr
dutye to gyue meate to the Lordes
family & household in due tyme. It
Luke. xviii. is ther duty to lede Christen people
Mat. xxiiii. w doctrine & knowlege. It is theyr
Luke. xii. duty to conforte the weake, to bynd
1. Timo. v up that is broken, to bryng agayne
Ezec. xxxiiii that is caste awaye, to seake vp that
is loste, & to cherysshe all the flocke of
Christ. It is ther duty to cast away
1. Tim. iiii. vngodly & olde wyues fables, and to
exercyse themselues vnto godlynes
It is theyr dutye to be an example
of the faythfull in worde, in conuer-
1. Tim. v sacion, in loue, in spirite, in fayth, in
purite. It is therduty to rebuke the
that synne before all menne, that o-
ther may haue feare. It is theyr du-
2. Tim. ii. tye to shewe them selues cōmenda-
ble to God worke men yt nede not to

be

be ashamed, iustly dyuyding ẏ word of truth. It is ther duty not to stryue, but to be gentle & peaseable toward all men, redy to teache, sufferyng the euyll wyth mekenes, enformynge them that resiste, if God at ony tyme gyue them repentaunce to knowe the truthe. It is theyr dutie to preach the word, to be feruent both in tyme & out of tyme, to reproue, to rebuke to exhorte with al softnes and doctrine. It is theyr duty to watch ī al thynges, not to shrinck in afflicciones, to do the worcke of an Euangeliste, to make theyr ministracion commendable euen vnto ẏ vttermost. It is theyr duty to be fautles, as the stewardes of God, not hyghe wynded, not angrye, not droncken, not fyghtyng, not gyuen to fylthy lucre, but mayntenyng Hospitalite, studious of good thinges, sober ryghteous, godly, temperate, & holdynge

ii. Tim. iii

Titus. i.

dyng fast that faythful word, which is accordyng to doctrine, that they
1.Pet.v. may be able to exhorte by wholsome doctrine, & to ouercome them that speake agaynst it. It is theyr dutye to fede ỹ flocke of Christ, somuch as lyeth in theyr power. To be short it is ther duty to shewe themselues dispẽsatours of the diuine misteries on such mãner, that they may seme & appere vnto all menne to haue taken ther power to edifye & not to destroye. For they are the lyghte of the world to shew men how they ought to walk. They are the salt of ỹ earth to sauoure such as be vnsauerye.

But alas, the lyght of the worlde I mean Prestes, is now so do dymme, ỹ it shewethe almoste no lyght at al. Menne ỹ walke in darknes can not perceaue how to walke, the Prestes are so wrapped about wyth the workes of darkenes. The salt of ỹ earth

I meane the Prestes, is so vnsauery 370.
that it can not sucke out the corrup
te humores. The people that are di-
seased can not be healed, ỹ prestes
them selues are so feble, weake, infir
me, sycke & wounded on euery part.

Moreouer ỹ Prestes, which wuld Esay. lvi.
be ouersears of ỹ people, are al blind
as the Prophet sayth, they are all wi
out knowlege, they are dumme dog
ges, not able once to barke, they ha-
ue a pleasure to looke vpon vayne
thynges, they gyue them selues to
sluggyshenes, they lyghe snortynge
all daye, yea they are vnshamefaced
dogges, that haue neuer ynoughe.
The sheppardes themselues are wi-
out all knowledge. All follow theyr
owne wayes, euery one of thẽ is giuẽ
into couetousnes, euen from the hy Esa. lvii.
ghest tothe lowest. God sayth, Crye,
cease not. But they turne cacte in ỹ
panne & saye, Cease, crye not. God

sayth

sayth, Lyfte vp thy voyce as a trō-
pe. But they saye, whyst, not a word
vnles we be suspecte to be fellowes
of the new lerning. God sayth, shew
vnto the people theyr wyckednesses,
and rebuke theyr synneful lyuynge.
Na by saynt Mary say they, al thig
saue that. It is good sleappyng in an
whole skynne. He is not wyse ỹ wyll
cast hymselfe into trouble, whan he
maye lyue in reste. O Lorde haue
marcy vpon vs. By thys meanes is
it come to passe, that vertue is so ly-
tyll regarded, & vice so vniuersallye
vsed. Wo be to those prestes, whiche
neglecte theyr office, flatter the peo-
ple & suffer them to lyue in al wycked
nes. For they are the Authors of all
euell. They are the occasion that so
many soules peryth. They cause ỹ so
much myschyefe & abhominacion rey
gneth now a dayes. Theyr negligen
ce, ther silēce, theyr dissolute lyuing
cause

cause, ꝑ Gods worde is so euyll re- 377.
garded among many, and ꝑ so great
wyckednes suppresseth ꝑ honour of
the chriſten religion. Is it ony mar
uell? We se that ꝑ bodye wythereth
awaye, perysheth and decayeth, if it
wanteth corporal sustenaunce. Is it
thā to be thought ꝑ the soule cā be in
salue estate, if it wāteth her meat, I
mene ꝑ word of God? Chriſt sayth, Matth. iiii.
Man shall not lyue wyth breade a- Deut. viii.
lone, but wyth euery worde, that cō
meth forth from the mouth of God.
Salomon also sayth. When ꝑ preā- Pro. xxix.
chyng of Gods worde fayleth, than
perysh the people ⁊ come to nought.
We fynd thys true euery daye more
⁊ more. For the longer we lyue, the
more wyckednes do we se reygne.
It pytyeth a Chriſten mannes hert
to beholde ꝑ face of thys worlde.
What vngodlynes, superſticion, Hy
pocrisye, dissimulacion, swearynge,
pryde

pryde, enuye, dronkenshyp, glotony, fornicacion, adulterye, whoredome, couetousnes, & an whole sea of euel les hath ouerflowed the world. And all this is come to passe thorow the sleapye negligence of Curates, nether can ther as yet be perceuedony amendment. The Prestes go forthe styl to neglecte ỳ office of preaching Gods worde, and ỳ people remayne styll in theyr old blyndenes, not carynge much though they neuer hea re one word of the holye Scripture preached vnto them in al theyr lyfe, so lytyll pleasure haue the poore selye soules in it, because they knowe not what a precious tresure ỳ most holye worde of God is. What than remayneth, but that one of vs monyshe, teache and exhorte another? as S. Paule byddeth, teache & monyshe ye one another For if one laye man were no more mercyefull to a

Coloss. iii.

nother

378.
nother, than ẏ Preastes are for the moste part, surely the greatest part of the world shuld, I thyneke, ronne hedlonge vnto the deuel for want of knowlege. Wherfore I exhort al mē of what degre & sorte soeuer they be charitably to monyshe one a nother whan they se ony man offende, and rebuke hym by the Scriptures of God, ẏ we maye shyne in the myddes of a froward & croked nacion as greate lyghtes in the worlde, pure, fauteles, & such as noman can complayne of, holdynge fast the word of lyfe. Let vs suffer no synne to reygne in thys our mortal body, but mortifye all thynges ẏ stryue agenst the spirite. Let vs so watch & gyue diligence to our selfes, ẏ nether Satan nor the world, nor yet the flesh, may haue ony interest in vs. Let vs hate deteste & abhorre synne, as ẏ mooste greuous pestilence and pestiferous poyson

Phil. ii.

Rom. vi

Math. v, Jacob. v.

poyson, that can chaunse vnto vs.
But aboue al thynges, as Christe & James monyshethe vs, lette vs not sweare at all, nether by heauen nor by earth, nor yet by ony thyng that is contayned in them. If one of vs at onye tyme shall chaunse to heare a nother sweare & pollute ỹ name of our Lord God by vayne, idle & vnlaful othes, let vs charitably monyshe the offẽder, exhorte hym to cease frõ hys swerynge, and moue hym vnto ỹ prayse of God and of hys moste holy & blessed name. For surely if ther were no mo synnes committedde in Englond, but only ỹ blasphemynge of God & of his creatures by vayne swearyng, it were ynoughe to bring final destruccion vnto thys Realme from ỹ which I beseche God longe to preserue it, and gyue the Inhabitaũtes thereof grace to correcte and amende theyr synful manners

And

And to the intent that men may knowe how great offence it is before God vaynly to sweare. I haue made this Inuectyue agaynste swerynge which here foloweth, wherin as in a clere myrrour they shal vnfaynedly perceue and se, what great dampnacion hanggeth ouer the heades of all swearers, and that it is not possible for them to escape ẏ mooste greuous vengeauns of God, excepte wyth al haste they repent. for sake, they dete stable mãner of swearyng & earnestly sal vnto the harty prayses of God. Thys myne Inuectyue I dedicate to your good Mastershyppe, to whõ I confesse my selfe more enderted & bound, than my poore beggary shal euer may be able to recompẽce your mooste kynd & free gẽtylnes, desiring you for your accustomed humanite to accept this my litle gift wᵭ ẏmind wherwyth I haue offered it to you and

and to take it as a testimomy of my
faythfull and seruiseable harte to
warde you. I was the gladder to
dedicate this my lytyll treatyse to
you, because I haue in times paste
perceaued, and styl daylye do, howe
greatly ye desyre that al menne shul
de lyue accordynge to theyr professi
on at Baptime, that thorowe theyr
good workes they maye garnysh the
doctrine of oure Lorde and Sauy
oure Jesus Christ. Nether is it vn
knowne vnto me what a feruēt and
godlye affeccion you beare towarde
the holy scripture, & howe desyrous
ye are that the worde of Christ shuld
Joan. x. dwell in Christen men ritchely with
all wysdome as saynt Pauls sayth.
Thele be the singulare & great gyf-
tes of God, which he hath wrought
in you by his holye spirite, and are
manifest signes & tokēs ỳ ye are the
child of saluacion, enheritoure of e-
eternal

ternall glory, & one of Christes flock seynge ye are so earnestly bent both to heare & practyse the word of god in your dayly maners. For Christe sayth, He that is of God, hearethe ẏ wordes of God. Agen, My shepe heare my voyce. Titus.ii. Colo.iii.

God mought vouchsafe to encrease these his gyftes in you dayly more & more vnto ẏ glory of hys most blyssed name and the saluacion of your soule, in whome I desyre to youre ryghte worshypful Mastership and to the good Gentle wo manne youre wyfe all good, luckye and prosperous thynges. Joan.viii.

AMEN.

Yours at cōmaundement and wyll Theodore Basille.

Leuit. 24.

Who ſoeuer curſeth hys God, ſhall beare hys ſynne. And he that blaſphemethe the name of the Lorde, he ſhall dye for it. All the multitude ſhall ſtone hym to death. Whyther he be Cytezyn or Straunger, if he blaſpheme the name of the Lord, let hym dye the deathe.

Auguſt. in Math.

They ſynne no les. whyche blaſpheme Chryſts reygnyng in heauen, than they whych crucifyed hym walkyng in earthe.

viii.

¶ The Inuectyue.

Whense shall I take my beginnyng, whyle I lament the corrupte mā ners of thys moost wret ched world, more aptely and fytter for the purpose, than of ỹ Prophet Jeremy, and with weppyng teares and sorowfull harte cry oute wyth hym, sayeng. Oh who shall gi- Hiere. ix
ue my head water ynoughe, & a well of teares for myne eyes, that I may wepe nyght and daye for the slaughter of my people?

The Prophet dothe not here bewayle them, that haue theyr bodyes slayne wyth swearde, or with ony other kynde of violence, but he lamenteth the to muche wretched and dānable state of suche as are slayne in

theyr soules with the multitude of synnes (for what so euer the sweard is vnto the body, euen the very same is synne vnto the soule (as it manifestly appeareth by his wordes that followe. For he calleth them adulterers, and a company of wycked trāsgressours. They bend theyr tonges lyke bowes, sayth he, to showte oute lyes. Is for the trueth, they maye no thyng awaye wyth all in the world. For they go from one wickednes vnto another, & holde nothyng of god. They are so false and crafty, that euery one had nede to kepe hymselfe from another. No man maye safely trust hys owne brother, for one brother vndermineth another, and one neghbour begyleth another, yea one dissembleth with another, and they deale vp no trueth, They haue practised theyr tonges to speake lyes, & haue taken great paynes to do mysche-

Veritas odium parit.

Exultat Veritas.

theke. They haue set theyr stoole in the myddest of deceate, and for very dissemblynge falshode they wyll not knowe the Lord. Theyr tonges are like sharpe arowes to speake deceat. Wyth theyr mouth they speake peasably to theyr neyghbour, but pryuely they laye wayte for hym.

These wordes of the Prophet declare euidently, that he bewaylethe thē that are slayne in theyr soules, by the reason of the manifolde wyckednes, wherwyth they are woūded inwardely & slayne, that is to saye, cast awaye from the fauour of God, & condemned vnto perpetual death, except they repent, beleue & amende. Solykewyse I at this tyme vsyng the wordes of the Prophet do not lament suche as haue tasted the death of the bodye and are gone, but them that are yet alyue in this worlde as concernyng theyr bodyes, but dead

thorowe synne as towchynge theyr soules. These I lament, these I bewayle, these I sorowfully for both daye and nyghte. These make me to laye aside all myrthe and ioye, & to walke as one desolate, and confortelesse. These cause me to wysh that I beyng one & a priuate parson might be banysshed, yea cursed from Christ, so that so great a multitude myght be saued My fayth is ỳ I am wrytten in the boke of lyfe, and nombred amõg the vessels of mercy, notwithstondyng woulde God I myghte be wyped out, so that these ỳ are slayne in the soule thorow synne, myght be saued. What one man hauyng but a carnel of Christen salte in his brest wysheth not so? Who desyrethe not rather beyng one parsonne to be dãned, than so great a nomber shoulde perysshe? What nede I rehearse here the tẽder affeccion of Moses, Christ

Rom. ix

and

and Paule, which they bare toward the ſaluacion of other, whom all we ought to followe? Moſes whan the Iſraelites had offended God for worſhyppyng of the golden calfe, prayed for them on this maner: Forgyue them, oh Lorde, this faulte, or elles wype me oute of the boke, wherin ỹ haſt wrytten me. Chriſt by the Prophet ſaythe, Iudge I praye you betwyxte me and my vyneyard. What more coulde haue bene done for it, ỹ I haue not done? S. Paule wyſhed hymſelfe to be banyſhed from Chriſt for hys brethren and kynneſfolke as pertaynyng to the flefhe, whiche are the Iſraelites. Certes he is no true Chriſten mā, that prouideth for his owne ſaluacion, and carethe not for the health of other. God, ſayth Chriſoſtome, wyll not that a Chriſtē mā ſhoulde be contemned wyth hymſelfe alone, but that he alſo edifye other, Ero. xxxii Phili. ii Rom. ix Eſa. v Rom. ix Hom. viii. in Geneſi.

not by teachyng only, but by lyuing and cõuersacion also. Charite, sayth saynt Paule, seaketh not her owne. Agayne, let no man seake his owne, but the profyt of other. This made al the holy fathers in tymes past to be so desyrous of the health of other that they wyshed euen wythe ỹ losse of theyr owne healthe, the saluacion of theyr Christen brothers. who beyng of theyr mynd, and godly enspired wisheth not ỹ same at this hour For euen as the Prophet Hieremye dyd lament the wyckednes of ỹ people whiche lyued at that tyme, euen so I am sure, do so many as are godly mynded, bewayle the vngodlines that reygne among vs at this daye. For consyder what synne and howe manifold reygned at that tyme, euẽ the very same w̃ a great heape more reygneth yea & triumpheth in these our dayes, so greatly hathe wyckednes

1. Cor. xiii
Phil. ii.

Hie. ix

Vice greatly encreased

nes preuayled and got tē the vppermooſt hand.

If I ſhulde diſcend & go downe into the great Occean and mayne ſee, which ouerfloweth the whole worlde wyth thaboundans of all euelles, ſo ſhoulde I neuer be able to ſayle and paſſe thorow. I wyl therfore at this tyme take vpon me onely to ſearche the ſeuerall ſea of one ſynne only, although it may ſeme to be both great, large, brode, depe, bottomeles, & not able to be ſayled thorow of ony mā, and ſhewe howe many daūgers and greuous perrelles abyde them, that preſume to paſſe in that cruell & fearſe ſee. And this ſynne is the mooſt wycked and deteſtable vice of ſwearyng, which now reygneth ſo greatly in euery place, that I feare all admonicions, exhortacions, warnynges and councels are fruſtrate and vayne, ſo euell is a noughtye & per-

uerſe cuſtome, ſo rare a thynge is it to heale that pocke, which is rooted by the bonne. Notwythſtondyng al thoughe ſome paduenture ſhal laugh at this my laboure as a ſonge ſunge to them that are deafe eared, yet for aſmuche as my truſt is, ꝑ al whiche be entangled with this vice, are not of a deſperate mind, nor ſo ouerwhelmed wyth the waues of this vnmercifull ſea, but that they maye be called agayne, & brought vnto amendment, euē for theyr ſake, and to wyn theyr ſoules vnto glory, wyl I ſpeke ſomewhat in this matter, & declare how greatly the abhominable ſynne of ſwearyng is to be deteſted, and abhorred of euery true Chriſten harte. Therfore I ſhall mooſt intierlye deſyre all faythefull and Chriſten people that ſhall read this my worke to marke diligently what ſo euer they ſhall here fynde, and to repoſe it in ꝑ

bottome

bottome of theyr hartes as a graue & weyghty matter pertaynyng vnto the healthy of theyr soules. If ony man wyll not amend after this our admonicion, his damnacion fall vpon his owne head. For I am free frō his bloud, and haue done my dutye in this behalfe.

Saye not but that ye are warned

After that God had brought his people the Israelites out of Egipte, myndyng to institute & appoynte a newe publique weale, that shulde be gouerned after his deuyse and appoyntment, he ordined certayne ceremonies and ordinaunces, whiche they shoulde obserue, and by the obseruaūs therof shewe and outwardly declare theyr obediente harte towarde hym. Among all other for the ryght institucio of theyr lyfe, he gaue them by his seruaunt Moses ten cō maundemētes, whych by no meanes they myght transgresse, except they would

woulde faull into his great displeasure, wrathe & indignation. To the
Deut. xxviii. kepers of those commaundementes he promised all good, fortunate and prosperous thynges, but to the trãsgressours & suche as breke them, he thyeatened all troublous, greuous and paynefull thynges, as we maye se in the bokes of Moses & of ỹ other Prophetes. Amõg all other he gaue a commaundement, whiche is thys.

„ Thou shalte not take the na-
„ me of thy Lorde God in vay-
„ ne. For the Lorde wyll not
„ holde hym gylteles that ta-
„ keth hys name in vayne.

As thoughe he shoulde saye, Beholde I am ỹ Lorde thy God, which haue done the many greate & singuler pleasures. I haue made the lyke vnto myn owne similitude, lykenes

and

and image. I haue preserued the frō eternall damnacion, vnto the which thou haddest made thy selfe bounde thorowe the offence of thy fyrste father Adam, whiche he committed in Paradise. I haue fed the in thy mothers wombe. I haue norysshed the hytherto. I haue sent the thy helth, & saued the from all daungers. And nowat the last also euē of myne owne mere mercy & fre goodnes. I haue deliuered the out of Egypt that lond of seruitude & extreme bondage, euē out of the handes of that thy moost cruel & vnmercyful enemy Pharao I fede the with meate from heauen I gyue the drynche out of the harde & stony rocke, & nowe I hast with al mayne to lead the into the lond of ỹ Cananites, euen suche a lond as floweth wyth mylke and hony, & abundethe wyth all good thynges, where (thyne enemies caste out before thy face)

Gen iii
Rom. v

Exo xiiii

Ex. xvi xvii

face) thou shalte lyue & reygne lyke a moost wealthy Prynce & rulare of the earth. Looke therfore that thou kepe my commaundementes & ordinaunces. Heare my voyce. Flye the voyces of straungers. Looke thou haue none other Gods besydes me. Take me for thyne one & alone god. Feare, honoure & worshyp me alone. Loue me wyth all thy harte, myde strength, power, soule. &c. Hange on me. Seake for all good thynges at my hand. Beleue me to be that God alone, which am omnisufficient, pleteous to gyue and nedy of nothyng. Make the no grauen ymage vnto ỹ lykenes of ony thyng in heuē, earth or elles where. Do no reuerence nor honoure vnto them. But aboue all thynges loke thou take not ỹ name of me thy lord God in vayne. For if ỹ so do verely thou shalt not escape vnponyshed. I wyll be reuenged of thy wyc-

Exo. xx. Deut. v.

wyckednes. For by no means wyll I suffer my name to be polluted & defiled wythe thyne abhominable & vnlawfull othes. And that thou mayst take my name into thy mouth with honour, and reuerence it whan it is named, remēber that I am a Lorde, terrible in aspecte, greate in power, righteous in iudgemēt, redy to take vēgeaūce on thy wycked, & such one as am acōsumig fyre, & by no means cā suffer iniquite. And as for the workers therof I hate, detest, and vtterly abhore. Agayne thou arte a miserable, wretched and vyle synner, begotten, conceaued & borne in synne, ful of al fylthynesse, wycked in al thy thoughtes, wordes and dedes, deseruyng at euery houre by thyne abhominable lyuyng to be caste into hell fyre, were not I called awaye from takynge vengeaunce by my greate mercy, and long suffryng what art thou

A compariſō betwene god and man. Iob. xxxviii
Exo. xv.
Deut. iiii
Heb. xiii.
Psal vi.
Math. vii.
Psal. l.
Gen. vi. viii

thou than O man, whiche beyng so so vile, wretched, synfull & stynkyng dareste presume to take my name, whiche am kyng aboue all kynges, & Lord aboue all Lordes, into thy polluted mouth, seing it is a name, that
Phil.ii. excellethe all other, seynge also that vnto it euery knee that is in heauen earthe, or hell bowe and gyue reuereuerence vnto it, agen seyng that the dignite, greatnes, & vertue therof can by no meanes be comprehended? Use not therfore my name vnreuerently, but magnify, laud, prayse, honoure and worshyp it both day and nyght. Flye vnto it as vnto a strong Bulwarke, and holy anchore in all thyne aduersite. Seake for remedy, ayde, and succoure of all thy diseases at the goodnes of that. If thou doste otherwyse, knowe that I am the lyuyng God, into whose handes it is a dreadfull thyng to fault.

For I wyl visite the with moost gre Hebre.x
uous affliccions. I wyll ponysh the
with many intollerable diseases vp-
on thy bodye in this worlde. I wyll
smyte the, thy wyfe, thy chyldren,
thy cattell. All that euer thou hast,
wyll I bryng to nought. Of al men
lyuyng wyl I make the moost vyle &
wretched. What so euer thou goest
about, shal not prosper, but come to
an euel end. So that in this worlde
my vengeaunce, that is to saye, cor-
porall plages shall faull vpon the, &
after this present lyfe, shalte thou w Math.xiii
oute fayle be caste into vtter darke- Esa.lxvi
nes, where wepyng and gnasshynge
of tethe shall be, where the fyre shall
neuer be quenched, where thy tormē
tes shall neuer haue ende, where the
worme that gnaweth thy consciēce,
shall neuer dye.

Whose eyes send not forthe large
fountaynes of teares to heare these
thyn-

thynges? Yea whose harte faynteth not for distyllyng of bloudy teares, to heare so great & so greuous threates, yea and that from the mouth of God, whiche is ẏ selfe trueth, whych can not lye, which is faythfull in all his wordes? What mā is so infected with the abhominable synne of sweryng, that dothe not nowe tremble, shake, and quake for seare, to heare what greuous and intollerable paynes abyde hym? Who hath an harte so indurated and hardened thorowe the detestable & vicious custome of swearyng, whiche is not nowe redy so cease from hensforthe so wickedly to abuse the moost holye and blyssed name of God, and to honour, reuerence and worshyppe it euer after?

Ioan. xiiii
Titus i
Psa. cxliiii

Thou shalte not take the name of thy Lorde God in vayne. For the Lorde wyll not holde

holde hym gylteysse that ta ,,
keth hys name in vayne. ,,

God hathe gyuen ten commaundementes, yet haue none of them all cōminacions & threates subioyned expresly vnto thē, but two only, which are the seconde & the thyrde, one for Idolatrye, the other for the vniuste vsurpacion and vnlawfull vsyng of the name of God, whereby he manifestly declareth how great the synne of Idolatrye and of swearyng is in his syght aboue al other vices. Who is nowe so at defyaunce wythe the christen religion, & so lytle estemeth the glory of the moost excellēt name of God, that he wyll not cease from his wickednes of swearyng, & learne from hensforth to glorify the moost blyssed name of God, if not for loue, yet for feare of the moost greuous & intollerable plages that shal vndou

Idolatry & swerig are the moost greuous synnes

tedly faull vpon hym?

Thou shalte not take the na-
" me of thy Lord god in vayn.
" God speaketh these wordes wythe a
maruelous great & vehemēt: empha
sis, because he woulde haue vs im-
prynt thys hys precepte in our me-
mory. And because we shoulde harkē
the more vnto it, he addeth a threte
and sayth, For the Lorde wyll
" not holde hym gyltlesse/ that
" taketh hys name in vayne.
This is a greuous threat, & shaketh
al ẏ partes of a Christē mānes body,
ẏ is led w̄ony fere at al towardgod.
Nowe let vs lerne what it is to take
ẏ name of our Lord God in vayne, ẏ
we faul not into that synne, & receue
a rewarde worthy our wyckednes.
To take the name of God in vayne,
is to caull God a wytnes in vniuste
and trifelynge matters, vaynely to

What it is to take the name of God in vayne

weare

sweare by his moost blyssed name, to take it in our mouthes wythoute a necessary & vrgent cause, and to obscure the glory of it thorow wycked & vngodly othes. All they that thus do, shall not escape vnponysshed. O Lorde God howe many are there at thys tyme that transgresse this holy precepte? Howe many caull God a wytnes in vniust & trifelyng matters? Howe many pollute & defyle (ẏ in them is) the glory of Gods moost blyssed name? How many sweare cōtinually not only by God, & al ẏeuer he made, agayne not onely by his derely beloued son our Lord & sauiour Jesus christ, but also, w̄ honour & reuerence I speake it, by all ẏ holy mēbers of his moost glorio⁹ body? How common an oothe nowe a dayes is Gods flesh, Gods bloud, Gods hart, Gods bodye, Gods woundes, Gods nayles, Gods sydes Goddes guttes,

and all that euer maye be rehearsed of God? O wickednes. O abhominacion. What parte of Christes moost blyssed body do these wycked & abhominable swearers leaue vnrēt and vntorne? They are much worsse thā the Jewes, which cried, *Tolle, tolle, crucifige eum.* Awaye, awaye, to the gallowes wyth hym, crucifye hym, torment hym, leaue not one part whole of hym. For they only cryed vpō Pylate to haue hī crucifyed, but these swearers them selues crucify hym, rent, and teare hym. The Jewes crucifyed hym but once, and than theyr fury ceased, but these wicked caytiffes crucify him dayly with theyr vnlawefull oothes, neyther doth theyr malyce & cruelnes cease at ony tyme S. Austen sayth, They syn no lesse, whiche blaspheme Christ reygnyng in heauen, than they, whiche crucifyed hym walkyng on the earthe. Yea

Joan. xix

In mach

there

there want not, which haue so great pleasure in swearyng, ꝑ they thinke thē selues no men, excepte they face crake and bragge out theyr matters wyth large and shameles oothes.

They iudge it a poynte of elogancye, ciuilite and good nourtoure to enterlase theyr talke wythe abūdās of oothes. They recount him an asse a dastarde, and an hobbe of the contrey, that can not sweare valeauntly, so greatly hath vice preuayled, so greatly hath wickednes rooted herselfe in the hartes of men, so lytle au thorite bearethe vertue & godlynesse nowe a dayes in the worlde. The mā of occupacon feareth no thyng at al to sweare by God & to call him a witnes in a vayne and triflyng matter, whan he byeth or selleth ony thyng, so that he maye gette but a peny by this meanes. O Lorde what dothe it profyt a man to wynne all ꝑ whole

Wt of occupacion

world, & toloose his soule? How custo mably is this hearde dayely among them that be byers and sellers. By Gods soule man take it vnto the, & say not, but that thou haste a frendly peny worth. For by the blyssed body of god thou hast it as good chepe as euer I bought it? And yet are all togyther starke lyes. But lette it be graũted, that theyr ooth were true, is it therfore conuenient, ẏ in worldly matters & for euery lyghte trifle, we shoulde thus abuse the name of god, whom we ought neuer to haue in our mouthes without great reuerence, and for vrgẽt & weyghty causes? There ought to be so great sincerite, faythfulnes, trueth & singlenes amonge Christen men, that yea yea, naye, naye, should be sufficient. But alas there is so moch crafte, deceate, suttelty, falshode, and doublenes reygnyng in the worlde at this tyme,

O extreme abhominaciõ.

what truethe and faythe oughte to reygne amõg christen men.

tyme, that none dare trust another, no thoughe they promyse neuer so fayre, excepte they sweare, no nor than nether, excepte they haue them bound in blacke & whyght, as they saye, O Lorde vnto what poynt are we come, whan all trueth & credence is so farre banysshed from the boundes of Christianite, ẏ there is more fayth & trust gyuen to an obligaciō or suche other trifle, than to ẏ word and promyse of a Christen man? It is euen as the Prophet sayth, there is no trueth vpō the earth, but swearyng, cursyng, & lyēg. Euery man is a lyare. Euery man that lyuethe is nothyng but vanite, nether is ther ony trust in hym. Do ye thynke, sayeth Christ, that the sonne of manne shall fynde ony fayth on the earthe, whā he shall come? Verely I thynke but a lytle, which is an euident tokē that the daye of the great & terrible

Exulat fides
He that feareth notto blaspheme ẏ name of god wyl not let to deseaue his neyghbour

Oze. iiii
Psal. cx.
Rom. iii
Luke. xviii

iudgement is not farre of.

Dysers and Carders.

Moreouer howe is God rent and torne by blasphemous othes not only among men in bargaynynge, byeng and sellyng, choppyng and chaffgyng. &c. but also in playeng & ydle matters? How wyl the diser sweare rather than he wyll loose one caste? Howe wyll the carder teare God on peces, rather than he wyll loose the profyt of one carde? Howe wyl they that stonde by & beholde, forsweare them selues for the loue ẏ they beare to one of the parties?

Men of lawe.

Agayn howe depely do menne of lawe sweare vnto theyr Clientes, ẏ they haue laboured theyr matters earnestly to the Judges, whan many tymes they haue not spoken one worde, but styl prolonge the matter that theyr auauntage maye be the greater?

Howe doth the prest sweare, that if

it

it had not ben for the loue of suche & Prestes
suche an honest man, and for ỳ good & benefy
reporte that he hath heard before of ced men
the Paryth, he would neuer haue bē
person of it? And yet it is not vnkno-
wen, that the moost part of the loue
theyr paryshners so derely, that af-
ter they be once sure of theyr bene-
fyce, they care not although they ne
uer se none of thē after, so that they
maye haue the auāuntage of the be-
nefice, excepte peraduēture of theyr
deuocion it be at haruest, whan the
tythe barnes are ful, or elles at Ea-
ster to searche howe good the Easter
boke wyll be that yeare. This once
done, hense go they agayne, & leaue
a syr Johan Lack latin in theyr stead
whyche teachethe not muche more,
than the hyll mouethe. The wolfe
maye come, and easely rent, teare & Joan.x.
deuour the poore shepe. For the shep
parde hath gottē the mylke & wolle,
and

and he is gone. He hathe lycked the
fatte from hys parysshners berdes, &
hath taken his iourney. Take thou-
ght for the flock who lysteth. O Pastor
Zach.xi & Idolum derelinquens gregem. O shepe-
parde & Idolle, that thus forsaketh
his flocke. But alas what conscien-
ces haue these menne, which take so
muche and do so lytyll? If they wyll
reape carnall thynges, so must they
sow spiritual thynges, sayth ỹ scrip
ture. The labouryng plow mā & not
1.Cor.ix. the ydle lubber muste receaue of the
1.Tim.ii frutes, sayth S. Paule. They that
1.Tim.v rule well are worthy double honour
1.Cor.ix chefely they that labour in worde &
doctrine. For the Lord hath ordined
that they, which preach the Gospel,
shulde lyue of the Gospell. Wo be to
me, sayth S. Paule, if I preach not
ỹ Gospel. Shal these good men thā,
& God wyll, escape free, seynge they
do nought, and yet receaue so great

frutes

frutes, commodities and rewardes: what do we, O ye sheppardes, sayth S. Gregory: How may we be bolde to receaue wages, & yet be no worke men: We take the profytes of holy chyrche for our dayly stipende, & yet do we labour no thyng at all in preachyng for the euerlastyng Chyrche. Let vs consyder and weyghe, what greate damnacion it is to take here the rewarde of laboure, and to do no thyng for it. Beholde we lyue of ỹ oblaciõ of ỹ faythfull, but what do we laboure for ỹ soules of the faythful: we take for our stipend what so euer the faythfull haue offered to redeme theyr sinnes, and yet do we not once shewe ony diligence agaynste those synnes ether by the studye of prayer or preachyng. Let beneficed menne, which gyue so lytle attendaunce vp on Christes flocke, marke wel thafor sayde wordes of the holy Doctor, & consyder

Hom. vii. Super Iud. Dignus est operarius. &c.

consyder with them selues whyther they maye iustly receaue so muche & do so lytle for it, or not. Agayne the same Doctor saythe, the prestes, to whome the Lordes people are cōmitted, must watch with great diligēce vpon the Lordes shepe, that they be not rent and torne with the bytynges of the wolfe, that is to say, with the motions of the dyuell. God giue them grace once to be prestes & shepe herdes, not only in name & apparel, but also in worke and truth.

Dist. xviii cap. oportet.

Among seruyng mē also aboue all other, what wycked and detestable oothes are there heard? If there be ony of that sorte, which feare God & loue his worde, & therfore abstayne from vayn oothes, how doth his cōpanye lout hym. Loke what an asse is among a sorte of apes, euē the very same is he amonge hys fellowes. They thyncke hym not worthye to weare

Seruing men

weare a sweard & buckelare, that cā not face oute the matter with plentye of oothes. He ỹ can swearebest, & soonest gyue a blowe, he is counted an hardy fellowe, and fyt to do a Gētyll man seruyse, whan to saye the truethe, of all men he is mooste wretche and coward, and mooste of all vnapte to do suche a Gentyll man seruyse as loueth God and his holy lawes. Yea such pestilent swearers and fylthy blaspheemers of God and hys creatures ought all honest and vertuous Gentle men to putte oute of theyr houses, vnlesse they bryng the vengeaunce of God vpō theyr whole family, wyfe, chyldrē, seruauntes. &c If they knowe that onye man haue bene in that place, where the plage reygneth, & wouldе come into theyr houses, they speare the gates agenst hym, they shutte hym out, by no meanes wyll they suffer him to enter.

And

And why? Uerely because they wyll not haue ỳ plage brought in among them, vnlesse they should be infected and so dye. Alas for pure pite, to dye we are all borne, and dye we must at one tyme or other, whyther it be by the plage or otherwyse, & therfore it maye seme that the death of the body ought not so greatly to be feared why than rather do they not putte out of theyr houses these pestiferous cayti ffes, which thorow theyr abhominable swearyng infecte all theyr family, not onely theyr bodyes, but theyr soules also, and prouoke God to poure out his mooste fearse & greuous plages vpō them? Is not this the sayeng of the wyse man, the mā that vseth muche swearyng shall be
Eccl. 23 fylled with iniquite, and the plage, ỳ is to saye, the vengeaunce of GOD shall not go awaye from hys house? Awake therfore, O ye gentyll men,

awake

awake, & ye men of nobilite awake, suffer no swearers in youre houses, eschew them more then a venemous serpent, fede a dragō sooner in your house, than ony suche one as hathe pleasure in swearyng. For as towchyng the one, it only hurteth the body, the other destroyeth the bodyes & soules of so many as be vnder you, & dayelye prouoke the vengeaunce of God agaynste you and all that euer ye haue in towne, felde or els where. He that toucheth pytche, sayth Jesus Syrache, shall be defyled of it. And he that kepeth company wyth them ẏ are proud, shall learne pryde. Lykewyse they that accōpany suche as be swearers and blasphemers of Gods moost holy name, must nedes proue lyke vnto them, and therfore runne into lyke damnacion. Awaye therfore wyth such out of your houses, excepte they wyl amend. Mayn

An admonition for Gentle mē.

Eccle. xiii.

tayne

tayne none that shall bryng ẏ plage of God vpō your house. Suffer not the tender brestes of youre chyldren to be poysonned in theyr yonge age with the pestilent and damnable cōmunicacion of these abhominable swearers. But aboue all thynges looke that ye youre selues haue the name of God in so greate reuerence and honoure, that by no means ye abuse it at ony tyme by your vayne oothes vnto the euel exāple of youre family.

Parysshners

Agayne, whan the comon sort of people in a parysh are gathered together at ony tyme to make mery, as the custome in many places is to do chefely on the Sondayes, & other holy dayes at after noone, whan they oughte rather to be occuppyed in feruent prayers, or els in the readyng or hearyng of the holy Scriptures, what shamefull & wycked oothes do

they

they sweare? Whā they are once set vpon the ale benche, and well whyt-led in theyr braynes thorow the ma-ny cuppes that haue bene fylled in, howe faull they then to swearynge? What parte of Christes moost blys-sed body is leafte vntorne? He is ta-ken for ioylyest fellow, that can best swere. I let passe theyr other fylthy talke, dronckēshyppe, and excesse. O wyckednes. Are these Christen mē? Not muche before, they were in the Temple, and ful solemnely went vp & downe patteryng with a payre of beades in theyr handes, and whan ỹ preste redde the Gospell, althoughe they vnderstode not one worde, yet of custome they stoode vp lyke men, and whan the prest named Jesus in the Gospell, and they sawe hym for ỹ reuerence of it, make curtesy, they al so full manerly bowed theyr knees, as deuoute parsonnes, pretendyng

by that meanes that tyey haue the name of Jesus amõg them in great honour, yet streyghtwayes go they vnto the alehouse, and by theyr wicked oothes, do they there the gretest dishonour to the name of Jesus that can be done in the woylde. These people maye well be resembled to those Jewes, whyche in despyte strypped Chryst, & put on hym a purple robe, & platted a crowne of thornes & put it vpon his heade, & a reed in his right hand, and bowed theyr knees before hi & mocked hym, sayẽg, *Aue rex Iudeorum*, hayle kynge of the Jewes. God amende these croked customes.

Childre. Furthermore this damnable vse of swearyng hath so greatly preuayled among them that profesSe Chryst that it is also crepte into the brestes of yonge chyldren. It is not a rare thyng, nowe a dayes to heare boyes & mothers teare the mooste blyssed body of

dy of Christ wyth theyr blasphemo⁹ oothes, euen from the toppe vnto ẏ too. What meruel is it thā, thoughe they be abhominable swearers, whā they come to age? But whēse learne they thys? Verely of theyr parētes and such as bryng them vp. Cursed be those parentes whiche so behaue them selues eyther in worde or dede, that they gyue ony occasion of euell at all vnto theyr chyldren. Great is theyr dānacion. The bloud of theyr chyldren shalbe required at theyr hā des. Better were it for such fathers and mothers, if they had a mylstone teyed aboute theyr neckes and so to becaste into the sea, thā blaspemou-sly to abuse the name of God vnto ẏ euell example of theyr chyldren. Is it ony maruell therfore thoughe we be so greatly plaged, seing the name of God is so much blasphemed amōg vs nowe a dayes of euery degre and

age: Howe can we be bolde to saye, ꝙ we beleue in God, whan we lyue no thyng accordynge vnto hys worde: Wyth what forhead may we be bold to call vpon the name of God in our aduersite, seyng we wythout all honour and reuerence do so shamefully abuse it wythe vngodlye oothes: Howe maye we hoope that Christes bodye was offered vp to God the father a swete smellyng Sacrifice for our synnes, whan we so vnreuerently sweare by it: How maye we boldly say, that all our iniquities be washed awaye by Christes bloude, whā it shameth not vs wickedly to sweare by it, & to obscure the vertue of it by our vnlawefull oothes, so muche as lyeth in our power: Wyth what cōtenaūce shall we be bolde at ỹ dreadful day of iudgemēt to behold & loke vpō ỹ mooste glorious face of the euerlastig & righteous Judge Christ whose

Ephe. v
Heb. ix:
1. Joan. i

whose honour we haue so oft defaced
w̄ our vayne & ydle swearyng? Un-
doubtedly these swearers and blas-
phemers of the name of God are in
a farre worse case, than they appere
before the worlde. The world by the
reason of the longe custome & contí-
nuaunce therof, thyncke it no synne
ydelly to swear, nether doth it iudge
them that are swerers to be in onye
worse case, than the other sorte be,
but the worde of God iudgeth other
wyse of them. Gods word declareth
them to be the mooste greuous enemi
es of god, of his mooste blyssed name,
of Jesus Christ his sonne, and of his
mooste bytter passion. Gods word vt
tereth them to be the chyldrenne of
wrath, fyre brondes of hell, captiues
of Satan, and ryght heyres of eter-
nall dānacion. Gods worde sheweth
manifestly, ỹ they haue in noparte ỹ
celestial heritage, but are al redy iud

The world and gods word iud-geth diuers ly of swea rers.

ged to hel lyze, if they do not in thys lyfe repente, bewayle theyr wzetchednes, confesse theyr abhominaciō desyze marcy, and beleue faythfully to haue forgyuenes. For heauē and earth shall passe awaye, but ỹ wozde of the Lozde abydeth for euer. Ther fore this comminacion and thzeate, which accompanieth the commaundement, must nedes be true, & come to passe. The Lozde wyll not holde hym gylteles that taketh hys name in vayne.

Math v
Esay. xl.

Let not these swearers therfore glory in theyr wickednes, and thynke ỹ they shall escape vnponished, because God taketh not vengeaunce on them streyghtwayes, but rather let them thynche that theyr damnaciō shall be so muche the mozе greuous, seyng they escape so longe wythout punyshment. The rytche glottonne

Nota

of whome we read in the Gospell of Luke, liued in this world according to hys fleshly appetyte, and wanted nothyng that myght satisfy ỹ beastlyke desyre of ỹ flesh, yet ỹ end of him was euerlastig dānaciō. So shall it chaūse to al thē ỹ be wycked trāsgressours of this holy precepte of God Luke. xvi

The Lorde wyll not holde him gyltles sayth the scripture, ỹ **taketh hys name in vayne.**

This thret of god is not to be laughed at. For if there be a God, as I am certenly persuaded ther is, I am sure that these abhominable Swearers shall not escape vnpunyshed, let thē esteme theyr synne as lyght & as lytle as they lyst, yea I am sure, ỹ vengeaunce of God hangeth ouer theyr heades, wher so euer they be. And al though God take he not vengeaūce on them streyghtwayes, yet am I sure

sure that they shall not escape, if in
Ps.cxliiii this worlde, yet not in the worlde to
come, so righteous a Iudge is God,
so kaythefull is he in all his wordes.
Howe can it otherwyse be? We se by
Gen.iii dayly experience that if ony manne
blasphemeth an earthly Prynce, or
speake euell of his name, he dyeth ẏ
death streyghtwayes without mer-
cy. If such honour and reuerence be
gyuē vnto a worldly Prynce, which
is earth, & vnto earth shall returne
agē, what is thā to be thoght of thē
which blaspheme ẏ name of ẏ moost
hygh & celestial kyng, which is kyng
of all kynges, and Lorde of all Lor-
des? The blasphemy done to a mor-
tall man is ponyshed with swearde,
and shall the blasphemy done to god
escape, thyncke you, wyth a kylyppe
in the forhead, or with the knocke of
a lytyll woden betyll: as it beganne
in certen mennes houses to be pony

shed

shed nowe of late? Na verely. It is no sylyp matter, excepte ye wyll admyt suche a sylyppe, as shal sylyppe them downe into the botome of hell fyre. God is no popette nor no babe. It is not a sylippe, that can wype awaye ỹ blasphemy of his moost blissed name before hys hyghe throne & glorioꝰ maiestye. Wo be to thē ỹ syn, and kepe not my comaundementes, sayth the Lorde, for I wyll not surely spare them. In the olde lawe God gaue this cōmaūdement for the blasphemers of his name. Who so euer curseth his god, sayth he, shall beare his synne. And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lorde, he shall dye for it. All the multitude shall stonne hym to deathe. Whyther he be Citizyn or straunger, if he blasphemethe the name of the Lord, let hym dye ỹ deathe. What wyll the blasphemers of God saye to thys precepte? Do they

iiii. Esa. xv

Le. xxiiii

they thynke that God is a sleape, so that nowe he careth not for the glory of his name? Na let them be sure. GOD tendereth nowe his glory so much as euer he dyd, and abhorreth wyckednes now no lesse thā he hath done euer heretofore. He is a ielous god, & wyl not suffer thē to escape vnponysshed, that pollute & defyle his mooste glorious name. S. Austē sayeth, they synne no lesse, whiche blaspheme Christ reygnyng in heauen, than they, which crucifyed hym walkyng in earth. A certen wryter also in the Hebrue tong called Rabbi Aben Ezra writethe on this manner: Certes this is the custome in Egipt euen vnto this daye, that if ony mā doth sweare by the head of the kyng and dothe not fulfyll his sayenge, he shall be the chylde of deathe. If that he woulde offer for hys raunsome a great ſūme of golde, yet shall he not lyue, seing he hath despised the kyng

// In math.

In qeca-logum.

openly. If a kynge doth so, which is flesh and bloud, whose begynnyng & ende is vanite, and whose kyngdom is vanite, much more, yea a thousād tymes more ought a man to take hede, ẏ he offēd not God w̄ his tōg, ẏ he doth not so order his mouth, ẏ he maketh his flesh tosynne by remēbryng God in vayne. Agē he sayth, ther are many, which thinke it no great offence if a mā taketh ẏ name of god in vayne. But I wyll shewe thē, ẏ it is greter & more greuous thā ẏ breakyng of al ẏ cōmaūdemētes ẏ follow. For he ẏ is a mā sleare or an adulterer, whiche surely are great offēses, he cā not slea nor play ẏ whoremonger at al times, for he is in feare. But he that hath accustomed him selfe vnto vayne oothes, he cōmitteth in one day innumerable othes, & he is so greatlyn vse w̄ thys fault, that he perceaueth it not, whan he sweareth. And if thou rebukest hym & sayst, wher fore haste Ibidem.

thou nowe so sworne? He streyght-
wayes sweareth that he sware not,
yea and that for the to muche vse of
sweryng. For such before they bring
forth ony worde, they sweare fyrste,
thynkyng that it garnysheth theyr
communicacion very pleasauntely
so to sweare. But if there were in
Israel no more faultes, but this one
alone, it were ynoughe to prolonge
our captiuite, and cause ẏ we shulde
be plaged euery daye more & more.
These are the wordes of the Hebrue
Interpretoure, wherof we maye le-
arne howe great an offēce it is vayn
ly to sweare, and howe it heapeth vp
on vs the plages and vengeaunce of
God more then the breakyng of ony
other commaundement, except it be
for ydolatry, whiche synne thys also
matcheth. But let vs returne to the
scriptures of God.

Eccl. xxiii Heare me, o ye children, sayth the
wyse

wyse manne. I wyll gyue you a doc-
trine how ye shal order your mouth
who so kepethe it, shall not perysshe
thorow his lyppes, nor be hurte tho
rowe wycked workes. As for the syn
ner, he shal be taken in his owne ba-
nite. He that is proude and cursed,
shall fall therin. Let not thy mouth
be accustomed wyth swearyng. For
in it there are many faulles. Lette
not the namyng of God be continu-
ally in thy mouth. For lyke as a ser-
uaunt, whiche is ofte ponysshed, can
not be wout some sore, euē so what
so euer he be, that sweareth and na-
meth God, shall not be clene purged
from synne. A man that vseth much
swearyng, shall be fylled wyth wyc-
kednes, and the plage shall neuer go
from hys house. If he begylethe hys
brother, hys faute shal be vpon him.
If he knowledged not his synne, he
maketh a double offence, & if he swea
reth

reth in vayne, he shall not be founde ryghteous. For hys house shal be ful of plages. The wordes of the swearer bryng deathe (God graūt that it be not founde in the house of Iacob) but they that feare God, exchewe all such, and lygh not weltryng in syn. Use not thy mouthe vnto vnhoneſt and fylthy talkyng. For in it is the worde of synne.

Here the wyse man playnely affirmeth, that they, whyche sweare and take ỹ name of God in vayne, shal be replenyshed wyth wyckednes, & the greuous plages of Gods vengeāce shall raul vpon them. So that theyr house shal be visited wyth diuers ponyshmentes and plages. O terrible sayeng. To muche sareous & stony is his harte, that tremblethe not at the hearynge of these wordes. The Prophet Zachary also sayth, I turned me, lyftynge vp myne eyes, and

Zach. v

loked

looked. And beholde a flyeng booke. And he sayde vnto me, what seest ẏ? I answered, I se a flyeng boke of. xx cubites long, and ten cubites brode. Than sayde he vnto me, this is the curse that goeth forth ouer ẏ whole earth. For all theues shall be iudged after this boke, and al swearers shal be iudged accordyng to the same. I wyll bryng it forth, sayth the Lorde of hoostes, so that it shall come vpon the house of the thefe, and vpon the house of hym that falsely swearethe by my name, and shall remayne in ẏ myddest of his house, and consume it wyth the tymber & stones therof.

What wyll swearers and blasphemers of Godsmoost holy name, saye vnto these wordes of the Prophet? Here maye they se, that the terrible curse of God is come abroade for all Theues and sweares, so that it shall faull vpon theyr house, and consume

it

it wyth all that euer pertayne vnto it. Here maye they learne, that they iudgement is at hand, that theyr damnacion can not be exchewed, except they shortly repent, beleue & amend. For the boke of curses flieth abrode. It is no lenger kept in secret, and it shall vndoubtedly faull on the houses of so many as vaynely sweare. God can no lenger abyde this abhominacion, it is so great, and growne vp into suche an heyght. Wo be vnto all swearers for theyr oothes. For a daggar pyckethe not so sharpely, sayth Chrisostome, as the nature of an ooth doth. A sweard sleath not so cruelly, as the plage of an oothe doth. For a swearer, although he semeth to lyue, yet is he dead already and hath receued hys deadly woūd. And as he that taketh an halter before he goeth out of the Citie, and cōmeth vnto the place of execucion, & hath

Hom. 50

hath the Hangman followyng him, is dead, so soone as he goeth oute of the place of iudgement, so lykewyse is he that is a swearer. The oothe is not so soone come out of the mouth, but that the swearer is condemned streyghtwayes vnto eternall damnacion.

What wyll these blasphemers of Gods moost holy name saye to this golden mouthed Doctoꝛe, which cõparethe all swearers to theues, and sayth that they are like vnto a these that is condemned vnto death, and wereth his halter redy to be hãged? Are not these swearers come nowe vnto a sayꝛe pꝛomocion? They be lyke theues cõdemned to dye, sayth the holy Doctoꝛe Chꝛisostome. The Judge hathe gyuen sentence. They be condemned. So that although they be yet fre from ỹ plages of godes vengeaunce, as the these is be-

Swearers are lyke theues condẽned to be hanged

fore he commeth vnto the gallowes, yet they maye be as sure not to escape them, as though they were nowe already in theyr neckes. And the longer theyr punyshment is differred, the more greuous shall it be, whan it cõmeth. Many, I graunt, in this worlde are not ponyshed for theyr great abhominable swearynge, yet haue there not wanted examples in our tyme, which haue aboundantly declared, howe greatly the synne of swearyng displeasethe God. There lyue at this daye, whiche haue knowen certen mẽ to be great swearers of whome some many yeares before they dyed, were greuously punyshed wyth straũge and innumerable diseases, some by ẏ strong hand of God had theyr houses, as ẏ Prophet Zachary sayth, consumed wt fyre, some lost theyr speache before they dyed, a nother sort certen dayes before they dyed,

Examples of swearers ponyshed in our tyme.

dyed, had such an heate and brēning in theyr mouthes that by no means they could suffer to haue them speared. Theyr tōge & all that euer was within theyr mouthe, was so blacke as a coole. Were not all these manifest tokens of Gods wrath and vengeaunce for takynge his holy name in vayne? Woulde God they þ were thus punyshed, myght be an example vnto vs for to leaue the wycked and vngodly custome of swearyng. If we wyll not cease, but styll prouoke god vnto anger, surely we shal proue & feale those same plages, and myth more greuous. And wolde god oure paynes myghte cease in thys worlde, that we myght be free from euerlastyng damnacion. We all profesle Christ, and caull our selues christians, why do we not thā those thinges, that Christ commaundeth vs? Christ sayth, he that is of God, hea-

Felix quē faciūt aliena pericula cautum.

Joan. viii
Joan. x
Joan. xviii

Ioan.xv reth the wordes of god. Agayne, my
Mat.v shepe heare my voyce. Also in ano-
ther place, euery one that is of the
trueth, hereth my voyce. If we ther-
fore be of God, why do we not heare
the wordes of God? If we be ẏ shepe
of Christ, whye do we not heare our
sheppardes voyce? If we pertayne
vnto Christ, which is ẏ selfe trueth,
why do we not heare hys voyce?
Christ sayth, ye haue hearde, that it
was sayd to them of ẏ old time, thou
shalt not forsweare thy selfe, but per-
fourme vnto the Lorde, that ẏ haste
sworne. But I saye vnto you, swere
not at al, neyther by heauē, for it is
the throne of God, neyther by earth
for it is the footestoole of hys feete,
nor by Hierusalem, for it is the citie
of the great kyng, nether shalt thou
swear by thy head, because thou art
not able to make one heare whyght
or blacke. But let your communica-
cacion

cõbe yea, yea, naye, naye. For what so euer is more than that, cometh of euell. Herevnto agreeth S. James sayeng, before all thynges, o my bre- Jacob.v
thren, loothe ye sweare not nether by heuẽ, nor by earth, nor by ony other ooth. Let your cõmunicacõ be yea, yea, naye, naye, that ye fall not into dissimulacion.

Here are we forbydden to sweare by ony thynge that euer God made. If it be not lawfull for vs to sweare by ony thig yeuer Godmade, thã is it not lawful for vs to swear by him that made al thinges. If it be synne to sweare by the creatures thã must it nedes be damnable to sweare by ỳ creator. Why do we not remember these thynges, and leaue our great swearynge? It is a shame to se christen men lyue so contrarye to theyr profession. It shall be more tollerable to Tyrus and Sydon, to Sodo-

Math. xi me & Gomorre at the daye of iudgement, than to vs, except we shortely repent, beleue and amend. For that seruāt which knowethe his masters wyll and doth it not, shall be beaten wt many strypes. Swearyng hathe

Luke. xii euer bene coūted a thing of so great absurdite, that the very Ethnyckes and Gentiles dydde deteste it, in so muche that a certayne Greke Poet wryteth on this manner, flye swearyng, although thyne ooth be ryght & accordyng to the truethe. What a

Our damnacion is greate sayeng is this of an Infidell? Shall not he and such other ryse vp at the daye of iudgement, & condemne vs, seyng they were Infidelles, and we Christen men? Our Lorde be mercifull vnto vs. All hunte after worldly promocions, and seake to lyue in pleasure and welth, but no man seaketh howe to lede a godly & innocent lyfe, howe to leaue theyr swearyng,

and

and to magnify the moost glorious name of God. For we go forthe styll to synne, as thoughe there were no punishment ordined for it at all. We blaspheme ỹ name of god, as though he were so chyldysh, that he woulde neuer caull vs vnto an accoũtes for oure vngodly blaspheimies. We so teare Christ and al the partes of his moost blissed body, as thogh he shuld neuer come vnto the iudgement for to rewarde the good, & to condemne the euell. Christ sayth, that we shall gyue an accoũtes at ỹ daye of iudgement for euery ydle worde, that we haue spoken, what is thã to be thought of our abhominable othes wher by God is so greatly dishonoured? What accoũtes shal we gyue of thẽ? Howe narowly shal we be examined of them? What wyl we aunswere in this behalfe? What wyll we saye? what excuse wyll we make? I feare Math. xii

vnlesse we shall be redy of oure owne
free wyll, to runne hedlong into hell
fyre, before the terrible sentence of
damnacion be giuen, our conscience
shall so condēne vs. Lorde holde thy
holy hande ouer vs, & gyue vs grace
to amende.

Coloss. iiii. Sayente Pauls sayth, lette your
speache be well sauoured and pow-
dered wyth salte, that ye may know
howe to answere euery man. What
place hathe thys commaundement
of thapostle among them, whiche so
pouder theyr wordes, ỹ there come
nothyng out of theyr mouthes, but
vayne othes & wicked blasphemies?
The communicacō of these men sa-
uour lytle of salte, wherby is vnder-
stonde the wysdome of Gods word,
what salte signifyeth it is so fresh & vnsauery. Yea wolde
God these abhominable blaspemers
of Gods moost holy name, were not
extreme enemies to gods worde, cho

syng

synge rather to remayne dastardes
styll in the folyshnesse of the worlde,
than to become wyse and prudēt in
the wysdome of gods worde. All swe
rers therfore are enemies bothe to
god and hys worde. A Christen man
maye not acquaynte hymselfe wyth
such māners, nor so wyckedly abuse
hys tonge. For oure tonge is gyuen
vs, not that we shoulde sweare, lye,
blaspheme, ieste, rayle, scoffe, mocke,
& vse vngodly talke, but ỹ we shulde
onely speake those thynges, whiche
maye bothe turne vnto the glory of
god, & the healthy of our neyghbour.
And thys is it that S. Paule sayth
let your speach be wel fauoured and
poudered wyth salte. Our speche is
well fauoured, semely, honest & come
ly, whan there appeare the no thing
in it that maye offende the eares of
ony true Christen man, but is agre-
able in all poyntes to godlynes and
honeste.

Swearers are enemyes to gods worde

Colos. iiii

Mark wel

honeste. It is poudered wyth salte, whē it vttreth those thynges, which are godly, wyse, and edifye so many as are the hearers of it. Let all swerers marke this, and amende theyr cōmunicacion, vnlesse they be that
Math.v vnsauery salte, whiche shall be caste out and troden vnder foote.

Agayne he sayth, lette no fylthye
Eph.iiii cōmunicacion procede out of youre mouthes, but that which is good to edify with all, whan nede is, that it maye haue sauour with the hearers If no fylthy communicacion ought to procede out of our mouthes, muche lesse ought ony vayn oothes, vn godly swearynges, blasphemies. &c. come forth out of them. If our wordes ought to be good to edifye wythe all, thā ought they not to be such as should destroy both our selues & the hearers, which many tymes chaunseth thorow wicked oothes. Let not

dome, sayth he, and all vnclennes or couetousnes, or fylthynes, or folyshe talkynge, or iestynge be once named among you, as it becommeth saynctes, but rather thankes gyuyng. Ephe. v
If these thynges maye not once be named among vs, surely much lesse, yea a M. tymes muche lesse oughte oothes, swearynges & blasphemies of Gods mooste holy name be named among vs and hearde in our dayely speache. If the wrath & vengeaunce of God be wonte to faull vpon the chyldren of vnbeleue for these thynges aforesayd, as S. Paule testifyeth, certenly let all swearers be certenlye assured that they shall not escape the plages of Gods vengeaūce, and theyr damnacion shal be ꝑ more greuous, for asmuch as they profesſe godlynes, and lyue nothynge accordyng therunto. What are they ony other, than blasphemous mockers

of

of God? They saye that they knowe God, but withe theyr dedes they denye hym, seynge they are become abhominable and disobediente, and euell mynded vnto all good workes, as S. Paule writeth. They are wel
Titus.i les wythout water, cloudes caryed about of a tempest, to whom ẏ myst of darckenesse is reserued for euer. They are trees without frute at ga
ii.Pe.ii theryng tyme, twyse dead & plucked
Iudas Epistle. vp by the rootes. They are the ragyng waues of the sea fomyng oute theyr owne shame. Howe can they than escape the vengeaunce of god? The Sodomites & Gomorrians sinned agaynst nature, & therfore were they consumed wythe fyre & brymestonne frō heauē, the swearers synne
Ge.xviii agaynst the God & maker of nature & is it to be thought, that they shall escape vnponyshed? If suche as committe the lessest synne, be punysshed,
howe

howe can they than escape, which offende in the greatest? They maye be sure, if they do not amend, not only to be plaged with fyre & brymestone, but also to suffer all other kyndes of intollerable paynes, yea and that in hell, where is no redemcion nor marcy to be had. The Lorde, sayth Dauid, seeth both the ryghteous & vngodly, but who so delyghteth in wickednes, him his soule abhorreth. Upon the vngodly he shall reygne snares, fyre, brymestonne, storme & tempest, this rewarde shall they haue to drynke. For the Lorde is ryghteous and he loueth righteousnes, his cotenaunce beholdeth the thyng that is iuste. Agayne he sayth, God is a ryghteous Judge, and God is euer threatenyng. If men wyl not turne he hath whet his swearde, he hathe bent his bowe, and made it redy. He hath prepared hym the weapons of death,

Psal. xi

Psal. vii.

deathe, & ordined his arrowes to de-
stroye.

We rede in the forth boke of Mo-
ses, that whan the chyldren of Isra-
el were in the wyldernes, they fond
a man gatherynge stykes vpon the
Num. xv. Sabboth day. And they that found
him gatheryng stykes brought him
vnto Moses and Aaron & vnto all
the congregacion, & they put him in
ward. For it was not declared, what
shoulde be done vnto hym. And the
Lorde sayd vnto Moses, the manne
shall dye. Let al the multitude stone
hym with stones without the hoost.
And all the multitude brought hym
wythout the hoost, & stoned hym w
stones and he dyed, as the Lorde cō-
maunded Moses. If the man that
gathered stykes vpon the Saboth
daye for transgressyng that cōmaū-
dement, whiche notwythstondynge
was but a ceremoniall law seruyng

but

but for a tyme, and a figure of oure spirituall quietnes and reast, which we ought to haue cõtinually in our consciences toward God, which precepte also is nowe abolyshed, & stond in none effect (so that we are Lordes of the Sabothe daye, and maye appoynte what daye it shall please the head rulers to cease from laboure, ỹ we may the more cõuenientlye come togyther vnto the tẽple for to pray, to heare the holye worde of God, to se the blyssed Sacramentes ministred. &c.) If the man that gathered styckes, I saye, vpon the Sabothe daye was stoned vnto deathe by the commaundement of God for transgressynge that precepte, howe maye these swearers than persuade them selues that they shal escape vnponished, althoughe they sweare & abuse God and all hys creatures by theyr vnlawfull oothes? The other precepte

cepte was ceremoniall, & is nowe of no strengthe, but this commaundement is morall and abydeth styll in perfecte strengthe, and so shall do so longe as the worlde stondeth, shall ẏ transgressiō of this than escape vnponyshed? The other was punyshed by death, and shall this escape fre & wythout punyshment? Let the wicked worldlynges laughe at the matter so much as they lyst, there lyueth a god, agaynst whome the offence is committed, which wyl not suffer the blasphemies of his holy name and of his creatures to escape vnpunyshed And well were it wythe these abhominable swearers, which go forth in theyr wyckednes & wyll not amend, if in this worlde they myght be consumed with fyre and brymestone frō heauen, as the Sodomites were, or stoned vnto death, as the transgressour of ẏ Saboth daye was, so that theyr

The Jewes at thys day accordige to theyr olde wont, wyl teare there garmentes, whan the heare Gods blessedname blasphemed, for the drede of Gods feercewrath that is styred vp there by. Butte who among vs Christē, shewethe hiselfe by ony meanes, to be displeased there wral, in whom ough to be the loue, feare & dreade of God so wel as in ẏ Jewes.

theyr plages and paynes myght on this manner ende, & they afterward enioye euerlastyng lyfe. But it is to be feared, that after thys lyfe they shall feale more greuous tormentes, than euer the Sodomites dyd ether suffer in this world, or where they be nowe. God be marcifull vnto them, and gyue them grace to amend.

Hytherto haue we hearde howe greuous an offence it is before God for to sweare, & to take his moost blissed name in vayne, or to abuse onye of his creatures by vayne & vnlawfull oothes. We haue heard also, how God wyll not suffer by ony meanes them to escape vnpunished that wickedly sweare and breake this godly commauudement.

Nowe seyng that GOD wyll so sharpely punyshe them that take hys name in vayne, or feare not to sweare for euery lytle trifle by hym or by

hys creatures, what is than to be
Of periury sayd of periury? What is to be thou-
ght of them, which bothe falsely and
wyllyngely forsweare them selues?
Into howe great ponyshment shall
they faull, whiche feare nothyng at
all to sweare in a false matter vpon
the holy Euangely that moost vyr-
sed worde of euerlastyng trueth, yea
& to call God and all his holy sayn-
tes to be wytnesses in that behalfe?
In howe troublous and ragynge
sea sayle these wretches & miserable
caytiffes? What intollerable plages
abyde them? What fearse punyshm̃
tes and cruell tormentes are prepa-
red for thē? Howe is it possible, that
they maye escape the moost extreme
vengeaunce of GOD? Not only to
sweare, but also falsely to sweare?
Not only falsely to sweare, but also
to sweare vpon the holy Euangely?
Not onely to sweare vpon the holye

Euan-

Euangely, but also to caul God & al hys holy sayntes to be wytnesses, yea & that in a wrong matter? O detestable abhominacion. O wyckednesse, more than can be expressed. O shamefull synne worthy all kynd of punyshment. O incomparable vice worthy to be reuenged not with papers wearyng only, but wyth the moost bytter & intollerable paynes, that are prepared in hell for Satan and hys ministers. Thou shalt not forsweare thy selfe, saythe the scripture. It is not lawful for vs vaynly to sweare shall we than presume fally to forswears our selues?

Althoughe the company of them, which suffer them selues to be periured I trust, be not to be compared in nomber vnto the multitude of them ẏbe ẏ customable sweares yet wãt there not at this daye, which are guilty of that faute, and would God it

who so swea reth by god ẏ is ẏ truth & righteousnes & taketh hym to wytnes to maintayne hys lyeng disceate & vnrighteousnes he is a periure yll, lyghte, & suche one ẏ lytyll regardeth goddes truth, & hys commaundementes.

were not so in Englond What is to be sayd of those men, which for a lytle trifle wyll forsweare them selfes, & gyue theyr soules from god to the dyuell? Howe miserable agayne are they, which although they know the matter to be wrong, wyll for a lytle mony or for fauour of the party willyngly take an oothe vpon a boke, & falsly forsweare themselues cōtrary to theyr owne conscience? Are not there, thynke you, in the world, whiche for couetousnes of tēporall possessions make clayme to other mens landes, fordge false euidence, inuent wrong titles, and bryng in false witnesses wyth them to sweare vpon a boke, that all is truethe, whan they knowe the contrary, and theyr conscience condemneth thē for so swearyng? What abhominable wretches are all these? What periured caytiffes maye these be counted? What po-

nyshmen-

nyshmente can be inuented sufficiciētly great for theyr detestable wyckednes?

Thus by theyr periury and false wytnes is the true owner deceaued of hys ryght, depriued of his goodes caste into pouerte, made a wretche, & throne into suche misery, that nether he, nor his wyfe, nor yet his childrē are able to lyue, but many times perysh for honger. O wretched creatures. O insatiable wolues. 4.

Whyle they haue respecte only vnto theyr couetous affeccion, and labour to satisfy that, they neglecte & despyse both the helth of theyr owne soules, and the wealth of theyr neghbour. What for all that? Yet by this meanes haue they obtayned theyr purpose, and set the other beggarly fellowe besydes the sadle. Now they are menne of fayre londes. They are Gentle mennes fellowes. They are

able to lyue wythoute theyr dame.
They shall beare a rule in the countrey, and be counted among ỳ mooſt honeſt mẽ of the Paryshe. They shal haue nowe, wherof to lyue at theyr hartes eaſe, ſo longe as they lyue.
And whan they dye, they shall leaue theyr heyres ſuche lyuynges, that ỳ beſt Gentle men in all the countrey shall be glad to marry theyr doughters vnto them.

Are not theſe great cõmodities? who wolde want theſe pleaſures, ỵ maye haue them by one means or other: O miſerable wretches, whyche for a lytle eaſy lyuynge, ỵ that they maye leaue theyr chyldren wealthy behynde them, feare nothyng at all to caſt theyr ſoules into hell fyre.
What dothe it profyt a man to wyn all the whole worlde, and at the laſte to loſe hys ſoule. To much a wretch is he, which for worldely poſſeſſions

wyll

wyll putte hys ſoule in daunger: To farre eſtraunged is he from GOD, whiche regardeth the goodes of this worlde more than hys owne ſoules healthy. And what commoditie ſhall he haue by thoſe goodes wrongfully gotten, whiche he hathe leafte vnto hys ſonne, whan his ſoule lyghethe brennyng in hel fyre, and greuouſly ponyſhed wythe all kynde of cruell & intollerable paynes? The ſonne is counted a Gentle manne before the worlde for the goodes ſake, ỳ father is reckenned before God and his holy ſayncte a fyre bronde of hel. The ſonne is Lorde of many poſſeſſions, ỳ father is a wretche hath nothyng. The ſonne is replenyſhedde withe deynties, toye and pleaſures, the father is fylled ful of bitter ſorowes greuous paynes and itollerable tormentes. The ſonne ſyngeth, playeth daunceth and maketh mery, the father

Mark wel

A compariſon betwene ỳ father & the ſonne

ther weapeth lamenteth, sorowoeth, and wysheth hymselfe neuer to haue ben borne. Beholde what is the ende of euell gotten goodes. Behold how Dame Periury rewardethe her seruauntes at the latter ende. Behold vnto what poynt falshode bryngeth them, that vse it. Why do not mē remember these thynges, & laboure to lyue iustly, ryghteously & of theyr owne? Godlynesse is great ritches, sayth S. Paule, if a man be cōtent with that he hath. Oh that mē wold once be wyse, and remember theyr latter ende. So would they not hūt about to get the goodes of this wretched worlde by hooke or by crooke, as they do now a dayes, but rather lay vp treasures for them selues in heauē, where nether rust nor moulthes corrupte, and where theues nether breke vp nor steale. Treasures that are wickedly gotten profyt nothing but

Fidem spectato

1. Ti. vi

Mat. vi

but ryghteousnes delyuereth from death, sayth Salomō. Let not therfore those men thynke, which so gredely gather togyther the goodes of the worlde, yea & that vnryghteously, that those possessions can longe endure in theyr stocke, kynred & lynage. For we haue both hearde and sene, that goodes wrongfully gottē be soone dispersed abrode & come to nought. Is not this a common sayeng among vs: Euel gotten goodes wyl neuer cōe to good profe. Agayn, the goodes, whiche are wrongefully gotten, the thyrde heyre shall scasely enioye. The Latinistes also saye, *Male partum peius perit.* A thyng that is euell gotten, neuer thryueth, but ỹ spendyng of it is worse, thā the gettynge was. The Poet Claudianus haue very godly verses pertaynyng vnto this our matter, which I wyll here nowe reherse. Pro.5

In

Claudianus in Curetium

In prolem dilata ruunt periuria patris,
Et pœnam merito filius ore luit.
Et quas fallacis collegit lingua parentis,
Has eadem nati lingua refudit opes.

That is to saye, the periuries of the father escapyng punishment in this worlde, faull vpon the sonne, in so muche that the sonne is plaged for that the father hathe offended. And looke what rytches the tonge of the deceatfull father hath gathered togyther, euen the very same hath the tonge of the sonne payde home agen and wastfully spēt. The Greke Poet Hesiodus also sayth, that that mā whiche wrongly testifieth and falsly forswereth hymselfe, doth not only hurte Justice, but he himselfe also is so hurte, that he can neuer be healed after. Moreouer he saythe, that all his posterite and chyldren shall be of the lesse reputaciō euer after, so that they shall lyue in ignominy, & theyr renowme

Hesiodus

renowme shall be obscure, darke and of no price before all men.

Who nowe therfore is so mad as falsely to forswear hym selfe for a litle dungelyke mucke, seyng that by this meanes he shal not only prouoke Goddes wrath vnto hym selfe, condemne his owne soule, cast hymselfe into euerlastyng damnacion, but also procure plages for his chyldren ỹ succede hym? Oh that menne wolde once be wyse, and learne this lesson of S. Paule and followe it, hauyng meate, drynke, & cloth, let vs be contented. For we brought nothyng in to the worlde, neyther shall we cary ony thyng out of it. Fear not, o my sonne, sayde Thobias, we lyue a poore lyfe in this worlde, notwithstondyng we shall haue many good thinges, if we feare God, and go awaye from all synne and do well. 1. Tim. vi Job. i Tobi. iiii

But wolde God, wolde God that

Lady

Lady Periury dyd exercyse her vn-
mercifull and tyrannicall cruelnes
only in gettyng and scratchyng vp
together falsely and contrary to all
iustice the goodes of this worlde.
Wolde God, wolde God, she dyd not
also throwe her vnryghteous vio-
lence & churlysh malice thyrst, shede,
and sucke vp innocent bloud. Wolde
God that throwe her false wytnes
bearyng, true men were not put vn
to deathe causeles. Hath it not bene
heard, yea knowen and sene, thynke
you, that of very malice, & throwe
the periuries of false forsworne cay-
tiffes, whiche haue taken an oothe &
testified contrary to the trueth, and
gyuen false euidence at syses, sessiõs
or els where, many men both honest
and true haue bene hanged, or other
wyse rydde out of the way: yea and
that wythout a cause, as it hath ben
proued afterward: Some also haue
bene

Periurye
thyrsteth
innocente
bloude

True mẽ
are some-
tyme han
ged.

bene condemned for Heretykes, and
also burnte, for speakyng agaynste
Antechrist and Idolatry. &c. What
wyll mē saye vnto this? Is not this
a thynge worthy to be lamented?
Wolde not here be a redresse in thys
behalfe. Deseruethe this malicious
periury to be wynked at, and not ra
ther to be ponysshed accordyng to ȳ
desertes therof? Awake, awake, ye
Questmongers, and take hede you
gyue a true, iust & ryght verdit. Re
member that ye go vpō lyfe & death,
and therfore ought ye to do nothyng
rashly. Remember that it is not the
bloude of an ore or a calfe that shall
be shed, but the bloude of a Christen
man, for whose lyfe and healthe oure
Lorde & sauioure Jesus Christ dyd
suffer his moost precious bloude to
be shed, and in whose harte the holye
Ghoste dwelleth. Remember that he
is the Image of god, which hath his

An admo
nicion for
questmon
gers

1. Cor. iii

lyfe

lyke put into youre handes ether to
Gen.ii. be saued, or to be cast awaye. Remember that if ye defyle the Temple of God, & handle a Chriſten man other wyſe, thā ryght require, ſurely god wyll deſtroy you. The bloud of that innocent, whome ye ſo cruelly haue murthered, ſhall crye for vengeaūce agaynſt you both daye & nyght, as
Gen.iiii the bloud of Abell dyd vpon Cayn,
1.Joan.iii & neuer ceaſe vntyll God hath take
Math.vii vengeaūce on you. Remember that
Luke.vi. wyth what meſure ye mete to other wyth the ſame ſhall it be meſured agayne vnto you. Therfore take ye hede. Be not raſhe nor haſtye in gyuing your verdit. Be prudent, wyſe & circumſpecte. Ponder all thynges wyth a ryght vp conſcience. Weygh the matter in the balance of iuſtice. Marke all parties. Beleue not euery lyghte tale ſtreyghtewayes, but boulte out wyth all diligence the ori

ginall

ginal of it. Lette nother the ryt ches, nor the same, nor the dignite, nor yette the giftes of that manne, which putteth in the inditement a-genst another, moue you ony thyng at all to gyue the more credence vn-to his wordes, & by that meanes to caste awaye the partye accused, vn-tyll ye haue thorowly boulted oute ỳ trueth of the matter. Shew suche indifferency, ỳ ye maye not be found at the dredefull daye of iudgement gyltye of the shedyng of ony ryghte-ous bloud, but blameles and wythe a pure conscience.

An admonicion for iuges

Ye Iudges also execute youre of-fice accordyng to equite. Suffer not the conforties to be oppressed. Lette iustice conioyned with a fatherly pi-tie and tender compassion reygne in your brestes. Suffer no matter of vnryghteousnes to preuayle be-fore the seat of your iudgyng place.

Remem-

Remẽber that whyle ye syt in iudgement, ye are no pryuate personnes. Ye represent the parson of God. Ye execute Gods office. Ye are the Image of God. Yea ye are Gods and the sonnes of the mooste hyghest, as the scripture calleth you. Your iudgynge place is the iudgyng place of God. Your mouth is the mouthe of God. Beware therfore what sentẽce ye pronounce. Lette all thynges be done with great deliberacion. Gyue not iudgement so hastely, ẏ ye shal afterwarde repent you therof. Remẽber that as ye iudge, so shal ye be iudged. God hath set you in authorite, that ye shulde ryghteously iudge of all thynges. Remember that God hathe gyuen you two eares, one to heare the accuser, & another to heare him that is accused, that by this meanes ye shulde not be percial nor wedded to one tale, but indifferentely to heare

Psal. xviii
Ioan. x

Math. vii

Why God hath gyuen men two eares

heare both parties. Remember that for asmuche as ye occupye the place of God, ye ought not to puert iudgement, but to do the office of God, and to execute iustice, vnlesse the hyghe Iudge for youre vnryghteous sentence pronoūced condemne you and caste you into hell fyre. For GOD, Sap.vi
sayth the scripture, shall appeare to you, O ye rulers and Iudges, very dredfully, yea and that without ony longe tariaūs. Wonderfull harde iudgement shall they haue, ỹ beare rule. To the mā of small power mercy is graunted, but as for the mighty, they shall suffer myghty and exceadyng great tormentes. For God whych is rulare of all thynges, wyll Deut.x
not regarde one parsonne more thā ii. Da.vii.
another, nether wyl he feare ỹ greatnes of ony mā, for he made both the lytyll and the great, and he hathe a lyke care for all. Notwythstandyng
G. surely

Job.xxxiiii
Eccl.xxxv
Rom.ii
Gala.ii
Ephe.vi
Coloſ.iii
Act.x
i.Pet.i
Sap.i
Pſal.lviii

ſurely the men that be in authoꝛite, ſhall haue the greater ponyſchment. Therfoꝛe ye that iudge ỹ earth, take hede, loue ryghteouſnes. Judge truly, o ye ſonnes of men. Seake all meanes poſſible, that no innocent bloud be ſhed. Admitte no falſe wytneſſes, none vnlawfull othes, no falſe ſweaꝛynges, no malicious periuries to be bꝛought & receaued beſoꝛe youre iudgyng place, which is the ſeate of God, ſo long as ye iudge truly, and do youre office accoꝛdyng to equite.

Howe Iudges ſhal behaue them ſeluts, whā onymatter is bꝛought beſoꝛe thē

Whan ony matter is bꝛought beſoꝛe you, ſyꝛſt weygh, ponder & conſyder it your ſelfe diligently, and afterwarde delyuer it to the Queſtmōgers accoꝛdynge to the courſe of the lawe, and exhoꝛte them in the name of God chꝛiſtenly, charitably, frendly, ryghteouſly, indifferently, and wꝛ a ſingle eye and incoꝛrupte conſcience to looke vpon the matter, and

to

to deale so vpryghtly in that behalf and to giue so true & iust verdit, euē as though it shulde be presented and offered vp to the hygh & euerlastyng Judge Christ. Declare vn to them how great an offēce it is before god to gyue vp a false verdit, & by that means to haue innocent bloud shed and theyr owne soules condemned.

Let the Questmongers haue cōueniēt leasure to debate the matter among them selues soberly, discretely and prudently, and so after much consultacion and long deliberacion gyue an answere accordyng to trueth & iustice. And let such as shall be vpon the quest, be honest men, sober, sage, faythfull, wyse, discret, prudēt, godly, mercifull, ryghteous, louyng indifferent, pitiefull, brotherlyke, & euē such as feare god, loue his word, haue knoweledge in his holye lawe, walke wyth a ryghte vp conscience

What men Questmongers ought to be.

both before God and man, and haue alwaye bene of good reporte and honest fame among theyr neyghbours This vndoubtedly, (all thynges hãdled according to equite and iustice) shall not only mayntayne true and righteous iudgemẽt, but also make greatly vnto the preseruacion of innocent bloud, so that God the hygh Judge shall hyghly be glorified in al our iudiciall affayres. But lette vs procede wyth our matter.

Not only these aforsayd are periured parsonnes, which falsely forsweare themselues, and testify in vniust and wronge matters, but also so many as haue taken vpon them iuste & lawfull oothes, and by them promised to do some ryghteous and godly thynge, and yet leaue it vndone, and worke contrary to theyr godly promyse. As for an example, the Magistrates and head officers of the publique

Magistrates.

lique weale promyse with a solemne ooth to do all thynges accordyng to equite and iustice, and to accepte no parsonne in iudgement, but to do all thynges vpryghtly, to mayntayne the good, and to ponysh the euell, to exalte vertue and to suppresse vice, nowe if they contrary to theyr ooth worke vnrighteousues, oppresse the socourlesse, iudge for fauoure, condemne the good, saue the euell, persecute the fauourers of Goddes word mayntayne the Papistes, neglecte vertue, vpholde vice. &c. so are they falsely forsworne, & shall not escape the plage of Periury.

The Bysshoppes and prestes promyse faythfully to be earnest Preachers & setters forth of Gods word, and to lyue accordyng vnto ỹ same, nowe if they do the contrary, that is to saye, not labour in the haruest of the Lordes worde, nor lede an ho- Bysshops & Prestes

nest and vertuous lyfe vnto ẏ good exāple of other. but seke after worldly promociōs, lyue ydelly vpō theyr benefites, walowe in all bestiall plesures, tumble thēselues in all kynde of synne, hate thē that are prechers of Gods worde, dryue men from readyng the holy Byble. &c. so are they falsely forsworne, & shal not escape ẏ plage of periury.

Maryed folke

The man & wyfe haue promised fayth and trouth betwene thē, that they wyl be iust, and true one to another, the mā to loue his wyfe as himselfe, and to holde hym contented wᵗ her, the woman reuerently to feare and obey her husbonde, nowe if they breake this promyse, so that one delyghte the not in another, but ech of them seake after straung flesh, so are they falsly forsworne, and shall not escape the plage of periury.

All Subiectes haue promised to

theyr

theyr rulars vnfayned obedience & wyllyng seruyse, nowe if contrary to theyr promyse they resist the high powers, become disobedient, and repugne agaynst thē, so are they falsely forsworne, and shal not escape the plage of periury. Subiectes

All these heretofore rehearsed are gylty of the synne of periury, if they do contrary to the ooth, which they haue made, and therfore maye they be sure to receaue a reward worthy theyr blasphemous tonge.

Some man wyll saye peraduenture, are all oothes to be obserued? Shall a man fault into the synne of periury, yf he performeth not, what soeuer he hath promysed? I answer nay, not so. God forbyd, yt all oothes promysed & vowes shulde be performed. For many are folysh, wycked & vngodly. Therfore as suche displeased God, so ought they to be broken. A demaūd whyther all oothes, promyses and vowes are to be pformed.

These

What oothes promi ses & vowes ought to be broken

These are they, which fyght agenst Gods worde, whiche also marle the consciences of so many as kepe thē, and make them that accomplysh thē to commit impiete and wyckednes. These by no meansare to be kept of ony christen man, excepte he wyl offend GOD greuously by the obseruaunce of them. For an vnfaythfull & folysh promyse, saythe Salomon, displeaseth God. In euell promises breake thy fayth, sayth Isydorus, in a fylthy vow, chaunge thy determinacion. That thou halte vowed vnaduisedly, looke thou do it not. For that is a wycked promyse, whiche is fulfylled w synne. Agayne he sayth if ony man doth rashely define to do ony of those thinges that please not God, let hym be sory for it, & seynge that his determinaciō was done cōtrary to the cōmaundement of god, let it be called backe agayne, & stond

Eccle. 5

In Sinonimis. lib. ii. Cap. xxii. Quæst. iiii Cā. In malis.

Ibidem

in

in none effecte. S. Jerome also sayeth, thou shalte do better, o brother, if thou doste abstayne from the vngodly acte, than if thou doste styffely performe folysh wordes and perilous vowes. Hereto agreeth the sayenge of S. Austen, it is a poynte of great wisdom for a man to call that agayne, which he hath euyl spoken. S. Ambrose also sayth, It is agenst al godly honeste many tymes to performe the oothe that is made, as Herode, which sware that he wold giue to the doughter of Herodias, what so euer she woulde aske. He therfore slue Johñ, because he wolde not deny hys promyse.

Lib. aduersus. Iouinianum.

Quæst. iiii Can magnæ.

De offic. Lib. i.

Quæst. iiii Can. Est etiam

In concilio Toletano it was decreed, that it is better not to fulfyll the vowes of a folysh promyse, than by the obseruaunce of them to commit ony wyckednes. That oth, promyse or bowe therfore, which displeaseth

Quæst. iiii Can. Si publicis.

God

Marke wel God, repugnethe the diuine berite, fyght agayuſt the Lordes word, prouoketh vnto ſynne, condemneth the conſcience of the keper, and can not be perfourmed wythoute wyckednes, ought by no means to be obſerued & kepte, but refecte as a thyng muche daungerous and hurtefull bothe to the body and ſoule.

Iud. xi Suche an othe, promyſe, or bowe made Jepte, that if God wolde deliuer the chyldren of Amnon into his handes, whan he came home agayne in peace, what ſo euer thynge commeth fyrſt out of his dores, ſhulde be the Lordes, and he wolde offer it vp for a burnt offeryng. At his returne it fortuned that his doughter being his only chylde came out agenſt him wythe tymberelles and daunces. Whan he ſawe her, he was much amaſed and greatly ſorowful becauſe of his vow, that he had made to god

Not

Notwythstondyng he sayde, I haue opened my mouthe vnto the Lorde, and canne not go backe. So that to fulfyll his folyshe and wycked vowe he committed the greuous synne of manslaughter, and cruelly slue hys owne doughter contrary to ỹ lawe of God, whan it had ben better and muche more godly to haue broke̅ his folyshe vowe, and to haue kepte hys handes clene from the bloude of hys doughter, and to haue gyuen God ryght harty thanckes for the victory that he had gotten ouer hys enemies. For it is the sacrifice of prayse that honourethe God. The calfes of oure lyppes are acceptable sacrifyce and welcome vnto god, I meane thā kes gyuyng. For he delyghtethe not in the slaughterof ony creature, but rather wylleth, that they shuld lyue vnto that vse and end for the which they were made. God the father by the

God desyreth thankes gyuyng and notblou dy sacrifices

Psal. l
Heb. xiii
Psal. xlix

the Psalmograph sayth, heare, o my people, let me speake, let me testifye among you, O Israel: I am god, yea I am euen thy God. I wyll not reproue the bycause of thy sacrifices, thy burnte offerynges are alway in my syght. I wyll take no bullockes out of thy house, nor goates oute of thy feldes. For all the beastes of the felde are myne, and thousandes of cattell vpon the hylles. I knowe all the foules vpon the mountaynes, & the wylde beastes of the felde are in my syght. If I be hongry I wyl not tel the, for the whole world is myne & all that therin is. Thynkest thou, that I wyll eate the flesh of oxen, or dryncke the bloude of gotes? Offer vnto god the sacrifice of prayse, and pay thy vowes vnto the mooste hyghest. And call vpon me in the tyme of trouble, so wyll I heare the, that thou shalte thanke me. The Psalmograph

hymselfe

hymselfe also sayth, in me, o god, are thy vowes, which I shall paye vnto the, euen very harty prayses & thankes gyuyng. He calleth the vowes, ỹ we shulde offer vnto God for his benefites, prayses & thankes gyuyng, and not the kyllyng and offryng vp of our chyldren, or the performynge of such folysh & wicked vowes which cā not be performed wythout synne and vngodlines. Psal. lv

Vowes of entymes in the scripture are taken for prayses and thankes gyuyng

Herode also made a promyse to the doughter of Herodias, whā she dansed & salyed so pleasantly before hym and hys Lordes at a certayne banket, that he wolde gyue her, what so euer she wold aske euen vnto ỹ halfe of hys kyngdome. She by the counsell of her wycked mother asked the head of Johñ Baptiste. So that the kynge, because he wold not go backe of his worde, suffered the holy Prophet of God to be slayne, & no cause why,

why, but only ỹ he thought it wolde not stonde with his honour & royall dignite to breake his promyse. Ay to ylly bowe and more folysh kyng. Ay wycked promyse and more wycked kynge. Better had it bene for hym a thousaud tymes to haue gone backe of his worde, to haue brokē his wicked bow and to haue lost al his royall dignite, than so vertuous a man shulde haue bene slayne. Woe be to all those bowes and promises, whyche are not fulfilled without synne and wyckednes.

Agen we rede in thactes of thapostles, that there were mo than forty men, which had conspired agenst Paule, and made a solemne bow, an earnest promyse, and a foule deuoutooth, that they woulde neyther eate nor dryncke, vntyll they had slayne Paule. For we are redy, saye they, to kyll him, before he come nygh vnto vs

Act. xxiii

to vs by a myle. Here was a whotte brennyng zele. They thought euery hour a thousād yere, tyl they might mete with tholy Apostle, and sheode his bloude, they were so lothe to be founde double in theyr wordes, & so sory that he shulde teache ony more such newe learnyng and late sprong vp heresye vnto the great confusion of theyr holye synagoge, and the vtter shame of ẏ foole deuout fathers the Pharises, Scribes, Lawers, bishoppes, prestes, rulars of the Temple, elders of the people. &c. To preuent these high inconueniences and to suppresse ẏ great enormities newly reysed vp by the meās of Paules doctrine, ye wyll not easely beleue, what paynes these good men toke. They coulde not rest nether nyghte nor daye. As for meate dryncke and slepe was gone with them. Be mery at theyr hartes they could neuer vn

A whotte zele in dede but not accordynge to knowledge

tyll

tyll they had slayne Paule ỹ greate Heretyke, that teacher of new learnyng, that brynger in of new lawes that destroyer of all the olde laudable customes, that troubler of the cõ
Joan. xvi. mon peace, that sower of discorde, ỹ peruertour of the holy olde religiõ, that enemy of all good deuocion. &c. Therfore made they a solemne vow, in good tyme might it be spokẽ, that they woulde tast nothyng, no not so much as a pore ale bery for ỹ cõforte of theyr harte, vntyl they had slayn Paule, in so muche that they were gone so farre in dede, that they had rather slea Paule, and cast theyr soules into hell fyre for doyng that mischeuous acte, than they would once breake theyr vowe. For they iudged by this meanes to do God an hyghe sacrifice. Surely I thyncke that if the pope of Rome had at that tyme ben reygnyng, and in his full power

scaulled

scaulled, they would scarcely haue beleued that he had ben able to dispēse wyth theyr vow, it was so solem, fervent, and spronge out of the harts roote. Is it not to be thought, that they were whot in theyr matters, whā they coulde not kepe theyr mischeuous pretence secrette, but came vnto the cheke prestes and elders, as couers worthy such cuppes, & goostly fathers fyt for suche a confession, and tolde them that they had bounde them selues wyth a bowe, that they myght eate nothyng vntyl the had slayne Paule? Had it not ben great pitie, thynke you, that these menne shulde haue dyed for honger, seynge they fasted for so good a purpose? O holy votories. I maruell howe they could euer pacify theyr consciences afterwarde, seynge they made so solemne a vowe, and yet brake it. For they neuer slue Paule, so myghty a

Dignū patella operculum.

Lorde is God to defende his seruau
tes from the cruell handes of blou-
dy tyrauntes. But the holye religi-
ous men are to be holdē excused, for
as much as theyr wyl was good, al-
though they coulde not bryng it to
passe. *Voluntas reputatur pro facto.* There
wyll was taken for the very acte.
So ỹ before the worlde they were
counted godly parsonnes, becaus
they had a mynde to paye theyr vo-
wes, and dyd the best that in them
was to performe theyr promyse so so
lemnely made and takē, and befor
god were they recounted malicious
and cruell bloudy manclears. *Nam
uoluntas reputatur pro facto.*

Nowe in all suche folysh, wicked &
vngodly vowes, oothes & promises
ought there to be no fayth kepte, se-
yng the ende of them tende vnto a
noughty purpose, and playne wyc-
kednes, as holy Beda testifiethe. If

it

it ſhall chaũce, ſayth he, at ony tyme
ỹ we ſweare or promyſe ony thynge
vnaduiſedly, whiche beynge kepte
ſhulde turne vnto an euell ende, let
vs knowe that that ẅ more wholeſome councel ought to be chaunged
freely and wythout ony ſcruple of cõſcience, and whan neceſſite doth cõpell vs, we ought rather to forſwere our ſelues than for the eſchewing of periury, we ſhoulde fall into ony other more greuous ſynne. For Dauid dyd ſweareby God that he wold
ſlea Nabal a folyſh and vngodly mã and deſtroye all that euer pertayned vnto hym, yet at the fyrſt interceſſion of Abigail beyng a wyſe woman, he ſtreyghtwayes lette go his threates, put agayne the ſwearde into the ſcabbarde, nether ſorowed he ony thyng at all, as thoughe he had committed ony faulte at all for ſuch periury. Herevnto pertaynethe the

homel xlv.
Quæſt. iiii. Can. Si aliquid

1. Reg. xv

De offic. Lib. i.

sayeng of S. Ambrose, that Dauid dyd not fulfyll hys ooth by the shed dynge of blonde, it was the greater godlynes. Ise that Dauid beyng a godly and holye man dyd faull into rash swearyng, and yet that he had rather not to do that he had swonne than to fulfyll hys ooth by the shed dyng of mannes bloud. S. Jerome sayth he, that an oothe ought to haue thre compagnīōs, trueth, iudgemet & ryghteoulnes. Where these want, sayth he, it is no oothe, but playn periury. Therfore the ooth, promise or bowe, that is not grounded on trueth, iudgement, and ryghteoulnes, ought to be broken. It is grou-ded on truethe, whan it is agreable to Goddes worde, which is the selfe trueth. It is grouded on iudgemēt, whan it is not rashely, folysshly and chyldysshly made, but aduisedly and wyth hygh prudence and great deli-bera-

In Hiere-miam.

An oothe ought to haue thre cōpagnīōs

Mark wel

beracion. It is grounded on ryghte ,,
ouſnes, whan there ſhall ryſe vp no ,,
euell of it, neyther vnto oure ſelues ,,
nor vnto our neyghbours. Al othes ,,
and promiſes thus taken and made ,,
ought to be obſerued & hepte, but o- ,,
therwyſe to be broken, refuſed and ,,
caſte awaye without ony ſcruple of ,,
conſcience or beracion & trouble of ,,
mynde. For this ſentence of the prea ,,
cher abydethe alwaye true. An vn- Eccl.v.
faythful and folyſh promyſe diſplea
ſeth God.

Thus perceaue we, what oothes, promiſes or vowes ought to be obſerued, and whiche they are ꝑ ſhulde be reiected. So that all godly othes and promiſes ought to be obſerued. They that do not laboure to fulfyll them, forſweare them ſelues, & ſhall not eſcape the plage of periury.

Now wyll I returne thyther, frō whenſe I made digreſſion.

Deut. xix
Pro. xix

God in the olde lawe amonge the grosse Iues coulde not abyde a false witnes, but commaũded ẏ he shulde dye the death. If he can not abyde a false witnes, whiche maye testify wt out an ooth, howe thã can he abyde thẽ, which do not only bere false witnesse, but also in the confirmacion therof addeth an othe, yea and that a false ooth, and maketh God to be a wytnes in an vniust & wronge matter, so that by this means ẏ wretche is wyllyngly periured & falsely forsworne, God is blasphemed, Goddes moost holy name is abused, iustice is subuerted, trueth is oppressed, falsehode is mayntayned, wrong sentẽce is pronounced, the contrary parte, althoughe the trueth be on his syde, is condẽned, the man is vtterly empouerysshed, and for euer after beggered, both he, his wife, and all his children, if he hath ony? Are all these thin-

What incõmodity es ryse of Periury

ges

ges but trifles? Are all these thynges lyghte matters, and thynges of small importaunce? Is it but a trifle to beare false witnes? to sweare? to be piured? to be falsly forsworne? to blaspheme God? to abuse hys holy name? to subuerte iustice? to oppresse ẏ trueth? to mayntayne falsehode? to pronounce wrong sentēce? to condemne the gylteles parsonne? to empouerysh and vtterly beggare both hym and so many as pertayne vnto hym for euer and euer? Do all these thynges, which God so greatly abhorre, deserue no ponyshment? These periured wretches shall not escape, let them beleue me, they shall not escape from the terrible vengeaunce of God. For although ẏ daye go on theyr syde, and God differeth his plages, so that they are not ponyshed so soone as they haue cōmitted the offence, yet let them be well

Periured personnes shal not escape vnponyshed.

assured, they shall not escape, surely they shall not escape. The Poet Tibullus being but an Ethnycke, and yet not ignorant of the greatnes of this abhominaciō, and certenly persuaded that periury can not escape vnpunyshed, be it neuer so secretely handled, and craftely dawbed, wryteth on this manner.

Lib. i. Eleg. ix

Ah miser, & si quis primo periuria cælat
Sera tamen tacitis pœna uenit pedibus.

Ih wretche, sayth he, although a mā at the fyrst doth kepe his periuries & false oothes neuer so secret, yet may he be sure at the last that they wyll come to light vnto his great shame, so that punyshment wyll come vpō hym before he be awars for hys wickednes. The Greke Poet Phocylides also sayth, forswere not thy selfe neyther ignorantly nor wyllyngly. For the immortall God hatethe the false swerer, what so euer he be that

In carm. admon.

sweareth

sweareth. Agayne Cicero ẏ famous Prynce of ornate eloquence & moost eloquent Oratour sayth, the payne of periury before god is euerlasting damnacion, & before men perpetual dishonour, shame, reproche & ignominy. God hatethe periury so greatly in euery condicion, that he greuously ponyshed Zedechias, bycause cõtrary to his oothe he rebelled agenst Nabuchodonosor kynge of Babylõ.

Lib. ii. de legibus.

iiii. re. xxiiii and. xxv

Seyng thã that God wyl so greuously ponysshe all kynde of oothes bothe vayne & vniust, both idle swearyng & periury, what wyll these idle swearers & false forsworne creatures saye vnto this matter? Wythe what cõscience wyll they appere before the high throne and ryghteous iudgyng place of Christ? What wyll they laye for them selues? What excuse wyll they make? What shyfte wyl they inuent? Wyll they flye vnto the

Excuses of swearinge

to the custome, and saye, that it is ye fashon of the worlde so to do? I aunswere, Christ sayd to his disciples, ye are not of the worlde, but I haue chosen you out of the worlde. Now they that followe the fashons of ỹ world, are none of Christes disciples, so followeth it that all swearers pertayn not vnto Christ, seynge they so diligentely followe the manners of the worlde. And where as they obiecte, that it is the custome so to sweare, this can nothyng excuse them. For we may not looke what the custome but the trueth of Gods worde wylleth vs to do. Followe not the cõmõ sorte of people, saythe the scripture, for to do euell. Agen, do not ye those thinges, which they haue done, that were before you, nether be ye polluted & defyled in them. The Prophet Zachary also sayth, Be not ye lyke your forfathers, neyther followe ye the

Josu. xxv

Of the custome Note.

Exo. xxiii. Leui. xviii Zacha. i

the fashons of them. The holy Martyr S. Ciprian sayth, vndoubtedly we must bothe heare & do that, that Christ hath done, & that he hath commaunded to be done, seynge that he sayth in his gospel, if ye do those thinges that I commaunde you, I wyll no more call ye seruauntes but frendes. And that Christ alone ought to be heard, the father from heauen testifyeth, sayeng: This is my well beloued sone, in whom I am fully satisfyed, heare ye hym. If that Christ alone ought to be hearde, we oughte not to marke, what ony man before vs thoght best to be done, but what Christ dyd fyrst, whiche is before all men. Agayne he sayth, a custome without trueth, is an olde erroure. Therfore leauyng the erroure, let vs followe the truethe. Whan the truethe is once come to lyght, sayth S. Austen, let the custome gyue place to ye trueth.

Lib. Epist ii. Epist. iii ad Cæcilium

Math xvii Marc. ix Luk. ix ii. Pet. i

Epist. ad pomp. cõtra Steph Dist. viii Can, Consuetudo

trueth. For Peter also, which dydde circucyse, gaue place to Paule preachyng the trueth. Therfore seyng ỹ Chryst is the truethe, we oughte rather to followe the trueth than the custome. If thou dost laye agaynst me the custome, sayth S. Gregory, thou muste marke what the Lorde sayth, I am the waye, trueth & lyfe. He sayde not, I am the customs but ỹ trueth Now hath Chryst sayd to vs in hys holy Gospell, thou shalte not sweare at all. Why than do they not follow ỹ truthe & doctrine of Chryst, thã the wycked & vngodly custome? But many are so addicte to customes & old vsages now a dayes, ỹ although they se ỹ scripture manifestly condemne theyr croked customes & wycked vsages, yet wyl they by no meanes gyue place to the truthe. If a man obiecte and laye the scripture agaynst them, and wolde so reforme them

De vnico bap. lib. ii

Guiel. Auerſ. Diſt viii. Can Si conſue

Joan. xiiii Math. v

them charitably, than are they redy streyghtwayes to accuse hym of heresy, and to bryng hym vnto a fagot of so lytle authorite is the most holy worde of God recounted w̄ these bely Gods and wycked worldlynges nowe a dayes, & so harde a thynge is it to speake agaynst a custome, be it neuer so wycked and vngodly. O blonde soupers.

Another sort glory and reioyse so greatly in theyr wickednes of swearyng, that they feare nothing at all to take vpon them for to mayntayn it by the scriptures. Sayth not the Psalmographe, saye they, *Laudabuntur omnes qui iurant in eo?* All ỹ swear by hi, shal be praysed? Doth not godỹ father also gyue a commaundement & saye, *Dominum Deum tuum timebis, & per illius nomen iurabis?* Thou shalte feare thy Lorde God, and sweare by hys name? As concernyng the fyrst tert, whyche they alleadge, I aunswere, Psa.lxiii. Deut.x

these

theyse glorious & famous swearers differ no thyng from theyr father ẏ dyuell. For as he wrested the Scrip ture, whan he tẽpted Christ, so lykewyse do they. The wordes of ẏ psalmographe are these, all that sweare in hym shal be prayled. He sayth not all that sweare by hym, but in hym. To sweare in God, is to call God a wytnes in a iust, ryghteous & earnest matter, to take an oothe for the glorye of God, for the promocion of hys worde, for the mayntenaunce of the Christen fayth, or els for ẏ helch of our neyghbour. They that thus do, sweare in God, and they shal not be condemned but prayled for theyr oothe.

Math. iiii

What it is to sweare in God

As towchynge the seconde texte, wherin they saye, they are not only suffered frely to sweare, but also cõmaunded so to do, I answer: Whan euell thynges began to encrease in the

How swearynge came vp fyrste

the worlde, as Chrisostome writeth, hom. xxvi
whan there was a confusion made in euery place, and no order, whan men fell vnto the seruyse & worshyppynge of Idolles, whanne all fayth was loste, and all vnfaythefulnesse reygned, than began the Infidelles, seyng that one wolde not trust and beleue another in matters of cõtrauersy, to call vpon theyr Goddes for wytnesses, protestynge therby that they spake truth, forasmuch as they called theyr Gods to wytnes in the matter, (whome to name they thought it not lawful but in serious, earnest, graue, weyghty and necessary matters) and by this means obtayned they fayth one of another. Now for asmuche as God had selected the Israelites from the Gentiles to be his people, and would by no means hom. xxvii.
that they shoulde in ony poynte folowe theyr wyckednes, vnlesse therby

by

Why god suffered ỳ Iewes to sweare by hym

by they shoulde be allured from the true worshyp of god vnto Idolatry, he gaue a commaundement to thē, ỳ in all matters of controuersy, and in suche affayres as shuld make vnto his glory, and the health of theyr brothers, they shulde not call ony of those false Goddes, whome the Ethnyckes worshypped, vnto wytnesse, nor sweare by theyr names, but call hym a wytnesse, and sweare by hys name, & so euery one to beleue another for the reuerence and honour that they owe to his moost holy and blysſed name.

What is this to ỳ purpose? what refuge can these abhominable swearers haue here? Thys commaundemēt only serueth for graue, weyghty, serious & ernest matters, & they abuse it to cloke & couer theyr wycked & abhominable custom of swearing. Is this allowable before God? wyll thys

this go for good paymēt? No ſurely, GOD wyll not thus be mocked. God wyll not ſuffer his mooſt glorious name ſo wickedly to be abuſed. God wyll not abyde that hys worſhyp, honoure, renowme, glorye and magnificēs ſhuld ſobe obſcured, defaced & blotted. God is a ielous God, & he canne not abyde that he ſhulde be dishonoured by ony meanes. I am ỳ Lorde, ſayth he, this is my name. I wyll gyue my glorye to none other. Here therfore haue theſe ſwearers no refuge, but ſtyll runne hedlongs into euerlaſtyng damnacion.

Another company, that vſe ſwearyng, ſay, we thynke no harme, whā we ſweare, and therfore can it be no great faulte. I anſwere. Yet are ye not ſo fauteles nor excuſed. For the ſcripture ſayth, that we ſhall gyue a ſtreyght count at the dredefull daye of iudgements for euery ydle worde esa. xlii

I. that

that we speake. What is than to be thought of our idle & vayne oothes? I praye you? Shal we not gyue an accountes of them? Yies we may be sure, & also condemned for them, if we do not repent, beleue and amend Agayne. Of thy wordes shalte thou be iustified, and of thy wordes shalt thou be condemned. Howe gothe it thā with our oothes? In what case stond they? The scripture sayth, the mouth that lyeth, slayeth the soule. Do not vayne oothes so in lyke māner.

Sap.i

And where as it is sayd, we thinke no harme. I answere, the scripture sayth: Of thabundans of the harte, the mouth speaketh. A good mā out of the good tresure of his harte, bryngeth forth good thinges. And an euel man out of the euyll treasure of his harte bryngeth forth euyl thynges. What wyll we saye to thys? Are we

Math.xii
Luke.vi

not

not here playnely condemned?

Another sorte excuse them selfes & saye, fewe or none wyll beleue vs, excepte we sweare. To thys answereth Chrysostome on this manner: An ooth maketh not a man worthy to be beleued, but ꝑ testimony of his lyfe, the integrite & purenes of hys conuersacion, & a good mynde. For many oftentymes haue sworne and entangled themselues greatly, and yet haue they not made men to beleue them. Other haue only made as it were but a becke, and haue appered moche more worthye to be beleued, thã they which haue so greatly sworne. hom. vii

These wordes declare manifestly that swearyng among faythful and honest men neadeth not, and for thẽ that are vnfaythful & regarde no honeste, surely all the othes in ꝑ world wyll not make them to be beleued of

Oothes amōg ỹ faithfull nede not, amōg ỹ vnfaithful they profyt not

them that are vertuous & godly disposed. Therfore this can be none excuse for these swearers. Among the faythful, oothes nede not, & among the vnfaithful, they profit not. For he that beleueth not a man without an oothe, nether wyl he beleue hym, though he sweareth neuer so moche. But alas for pytie, that euer fayth shulde be so decayed among Christē men, that one wyll not beleue another, excepte they pollute and defyle the glorious name of our Lord God yea and that in trifelynge matters. It is hygh tyme for the worlde to be at an ende, whan one man trusteth not another. Do ye thynche, sayth Christ, that the sonne of man shall fynde ony fayth on the earth, whan he shall come?

Luke. xviii

Thus se we that al excuses, which are inuented to mayntayne ỹ dyuelysh custome of swering, are nothing worth.

worthe. Oure damnacion abydethe
styll. The heate of Gods vengeaūce
towarde vs is nothyng abated. So
that if we wyll be saued, there is no
remedy but to leaue our wicked swe
ryng, to reuerēce the name of God, Ero.xx
and thanckefully to vse his creatu- Deut.v
res, euer settynge before oure eyes
thys commaundement of GOD.
Thou shalt not take the na »
me of thy Lorde God in vay- »
ne. For the Lorde wyll not »
holde hym gyltelesse that ta- »
kethe hys name in vayne. »
Also the sayeng of Christ, swear not Math.v
at all, nether by heauen, for it is the
throne of God, nether by earthe, for
it is the foote stoole of hys feete, ne-
ther by Jerusalem, for it is the citie
of the great Kynge, nor yet by thy
head shalte thou sweare, for ꝓ canste
not make one heare nether whyghte,

nor blacke. But your communicacion shall be, yea, yea, naye, naye. For that is more than thys, commeth of euyll.

Whyther all oothes are taken away frō Christen men

Some man paraduenture wyll here demaund & saye, are all oothes taken awaye from Christen menne? Yea forsothe all oothes ẏ are vayne and triflynge, false & vnryghteous. Is it not lawfull than for a Christē man to sweare in no condiciō? Yies verely. God forbyd that all kynde of swearyng shulde be takē from Christen men, as the vngodly Anabaptistes holde, whyche affyrme that it is not lawful for a Christen manne to sweare by no meanes. This wyl not the scripture. Agenst this fyghteth the word of God. We are not forbyd den to sweare, but vaynely, idlely, falsely & vnryghteously to sweare.

The errouure of ẏ Anabaptistes

„ Thou shalte not take the na-
„ me of thy Lord God in vayn.

saythe

saythe the scripture. Marke that it is sayde in vayne. A Christen man maye lawfully sweare for the glory of God & for the healthy both of hym selfe and of other, so ofte as it shall make vnto the honours and glory of God also. For the glorye of God in all our othes is moost of al to be looked vpon & cõsidered. We ought not to desyre ony thynge, excepte it makethe vnto the glorye of God, moche lesse ought we to swere for it. I wyll make this matter more euident and playne by familiare examples.

For what causes a christen man may sweare

If a Christen man were amonge the Jewes, Turkes, Saracens or ony other Infidelles, preaching the word of God purely vnto them, and earnestly labouryng to turne them from theyr Idolatrye vnto the true seruyse of God, if they wolde by no meanes beleue hym, excepte he vydde sweare by the name of that Lord his

Example for the glory of god

God, whom he preached vnto them, that all is truthe that he preacheth, he may lawfully in this poynt take the name of God vnto wytnesse, and sweare that it is truthe that he preacheth. For thys oothe thus taken & beleued, turneth both vnto the glory of God, and also vnto the healthe of many soules and therfore isit not vayne and idle, but righteous & godly. On this manner dyd God the father hym selfe in the olde Testamẽt, the Patriaches and Prophetes, in the newe Testament Christ and hys Apostles sweare, and after this mãner maye all the sayntes and fayth full of God sweare. He that perceaueth, sayth S. Austẽ, that an oothe ought not to be had in good but in necessary thynges, let hym refrayne hym selfe so moche as he can, that he do not vse it, except it be in necessite, whan he seeth that men are slow to

Serm. i. de verbis domini

beleue

beleue that, whiche is profitable for them to beleue, except it be confirmed wyth an oothe.

Agayne, if it dyd so chaunse that two Christē men were at debate for some matter that is in controuersy betwene them, and the thyrde dyd knowe that the one dydde the other playne iniury, and wrought agenst hym contrary vnto the rule of equite and iustice, and so made declaracion therof vnto ỹ Judge. The Judge in this behalf may lawfully require an oothe of that wythnes bearer, & he that so testifyeth maye w a ryght & good conscience sweare in thys behalfe. And thys hys oothe is bothe ryghteous and godly. For by that is peace, amite, concorde & Christen charite brought agayne betwene thē that were at debate, and the worthe of the dyuell is destroyed, that is to saye, dissensiō & stryfe is takē away.

Example for ỹ helth of our neyghboure

An

Heb. vi An oothe, sayth S. Paule, is ẏ ende of all controuersy.

An example for the healthe of our selfes

Moreouer if heresy, treason, theft, manslaughter, whoredome or ony other notable vice were layd to a christē mannes charge, wherof he knoweth hymselfe gyltlesse and nothynge fauty, he may lawfully take an othe and sweare vnto the contrary for ẏ defence of his honest name and godly reporte. And this hisooth is both ryghteous and godly. For it dothe not only defende hys owne purite & innocency of lyfe, but also it setteth forthe the glory of God. For as God is dishonoured thorowe the wycked actes of them that professe hym, so is he glorified thorowe the good dedes of them, which do both professe hym & also lyue accordynge to theyr professiō. The Greke Oratour Isocrates gyueth an excellēt & very notable commaundement concernynge swea-

In Parenes ad Demon

ſwearynge, whyche I wyll here re-
herſe, that Chriſten men redyng the
wordes of an Ethnycke maye once
be aſhamed of theyr wyckednes. His
wordes are theyſe: Take an oothe ẏ
is putte vnto the for two cauſes, ey- Mark wel
ther ẏ thou mayſte delyuer thy ſelfe
frō a filthy cauſe, or ẏthou mayſt pre
ſerue thy frēdes ẏ are in perel & dan
ger. But for mony looke thou ſwea-
reſt by no God, although thou ſwea-
reſt ryghteouſly. For to ſome thou
ſhalt ſeme to forſweare thy ſelf, and
to ſōe to be deſyrous of mony. What
a ſayeng is this of a Gentile? Howe
lytle diſſentethe this from the holye
ſcriptures? Howe doth this cōdēne
them, which for ſlender auauntage
or lytyl mony wyl not only ſtreyght
wayes ſweare, but alſo forſwere thē Auſten for
ſelfes? S. Auſten ſayth, doth not he ſwearyng
take ẏ name of God in vayne, which
for the loue of a tēporall thyng (that
is

is playne fylthynesse to a Christen mā) taketh God for a wytnesse. The lawe hath forbyddē, that thou shuldest once couyt. Doste thou not couit, if thou byndest thy selfe wythe an oothe, that thou mayst kepe thy substaunce? Euery creature is subiecte vnto vanite. And is not this for vayne thynges? Ergo he sweareth in vayne, whiche for creatures calleth God a wytnesse. &c. S. Hierome also saythe, the Euangelicall truthe receaueth no othe, seyng euery faythful word is for an oth. Here vnto pertayneth ẏ sayēg of our golden mouthed Doctour, the cause of an othe is this, sayth he, that euery one that sweareth, sweareth for this intent, that he maye speake ẏ which is truthe. And therfore ẏ Lord wyll haue no difference betwene an ooth and our speache. For as in an oothe it is not cōueniēt that there be ony falshode

Exo.xx

In Math Cap.v

Quæstiv Can Iuramenti

falshode or breakynge of promyse, so lykewise in our wordes ought there to be no lye. For bothe periury & lyeng is condemned with the payne of the diuine iudgement, as the scripture saythe, the mouthe that lyeth, slayeth the soule. Who so euer therfore speaketh the truthe, sweareth. For it is wrytten, a faythfull wytnesse wyll not lye. Sapi

Finally, so ofte as ony ciuile magistrate or head officer requireth an oothe of vs for the preseruacion and mayntenaunce of the comon weale or ony other necessary & vrgēt cause we ought gladly and wyllyngly for to sweare accordyng to thys cōmaūdement of Christ, Paye that to Cesar, which is due to Cesar. But here are they to be monyshed, which shall require the ooth of ỹ subiectes, that it is theyr dutye before the other be sworne to declare the matter wythe The magistrate maye lawfully require an oothe

Mathi xxii

mani-

An admonicion for thē ẏ shall require the oothe

manifest wordes vnto thē, that they maye well perceaue, that they shall not sweare in vayne, but for weyghty and necessary matters cōcerning ether the glory of God or the profyt of the common weale. For mē ought not to be called forthe to sweare for euery lyght trifle, nor yet to sweare as many do, they can not tell what nor wherfore. The to muche customable vse of sweryng, hath brought it so to passe, that as many care but lytyl to sweare, so forse they not moche to forswear thē selfes. The cause for the whiche menne shulde sweare, ought not onely to be good, but also necessary, and so opēly proued vnto them, before they be broughte vnto theyr oothe. Thys shulde make men to haue the name of God in ẏ hygher reuerence, to take an ooth wythe the godlyer mynde, and to haue the office of the head rulars in ẏ greater

estima-

estimacion. For to make mē sweare by compulsiō, before they knowe the matter, whyther it be good, lawful, godlye, necessarye or otherwyse, lette other menne iudge, that be better learnedde than I, whyther it be agreable to the worde of GOD or not. But thys dare I be bolde to saye, that an oothe can not be taken wythe to moche reuerence & aduisemente, in asmuche as by it, God is called vpon to be a wytnesse in that behalfe. Therfore ought men not to be compelled rashly to sweare, vnles by that meanes they prouoke the vēgeaunce of God both agaynst them selfes, and those also that cause them so vnaduisedly for to sweare, but to come vnto theyr oothe wythe great sobrietē and deliberacion.

Thus se we for what causes it is lawfull for a Christē man to sweare, what soeuer oothe cometh forth out

of

of our mouthe, if it be not for one of these causes aforsayd, it is dãnable & playne synne. Therfore lette all men take hede. Let no man from hense-forthe take the name of oure Lorde God in vayne. for who so dothe, shal not surely escape vnponyshed.

Magistrates

Let the rulars of the comõ weale fynde some honest remedy, that the name of God be no more blasphemed among theyr subiectes. Let thẽ consyder howe loth they are, that they them selfes shulde be euyll spoken of and blasphemed. Lette them weygh wyth them selues, howe moche God excelleth them, & how farre hys dignite dothe excede theyr dignite. If ony man defacethe theyr renowme, they are ponyshed streyghtwayes, & not without a cause. But how chaũseth it, that the Lorde of all Lordes and Kyng of all Kynges is no more feared? How cometh it to passe, that

hys

hys moost holye & blyssed name is so vniuersally blasphemed, yea & ẏ frely and wythout punyshment? Were it not, thyncke you, conueniēt, that the ciuile magistrates shulde earnestly prouide, that the name of GOD myght haue hys due honour, and ẏ it myghte no more be abused withe abhominable & vnlawfull oothes in theyr Realmes, but praysed & magnified, seynge that by it we obtayne all oure healthe and saluacion? God by his holy spirite mought vouchesafe to breathe into the hartes of all Prynces, Kynges and rulars, that whan they be godly assembled togyther for matters cōcernyng the glory of god & the publique weale, they maye also entreate of thys thynge in theyr Sinodes, Congregacions, Parliamentes, councelles, &c. that God maye be glorifyed, & hys moost blyssed name exalted of all nacions

from the Eaſte to the Weaſte. By this meanes ſhall they not onely expulſe vice and make theyr Realmes to floriſh with vertu vnto the great glory of God and the hyghe conſolacio of all the faythfull, but alſo they ſhall acquire and get to them ſelfes a crowne of immortal glory for euer and euer. Amen.

Byſſhops Parſons, Vicars. &c

Agayne, let all Byſhoppes, Parſonnes, Vicares, Curates, Paryſhe prieſtes, & ſo many as are miniſters of Gods word, in all theyr Sermõs & other exhortacions vnto the people, aboue all thynges rebuke thys abhominable ſynne of ſwearyng, & declare vnto them how great an offence it is, & howe the plage of God and hys vengeaunce ſhal not departe from the houſes of them, yͤ vſe thys mooſt deteſtable ſynne of ſwearing. Let them conſyder that they haue bene the cheſe occaſion both of thys

Eccl. xxiii

ſynne

synne and of all other, seynge they haue not accordynge to theyr office diligently watched vpon the Lordes flocke, preached Gods worde, rebuked the wickednesse of the people, tolde thē theyr fautes, exhorted thē vnto repentaunce, & amendment of lyfe. For whā the preachyng of gods worde fayleth, sayth Salomon, thā doth the people perysh and go to hauocke. Christ had moch pytie on the people, whan he saw that they were destitute and dispersed as shepe, not hauynge a shepparde. For as shepe, whan they be without a shepparde, wander they can not tell whyther, hang on euery bushe, are rent wyth euery bryer, and in daūger to be deuoured of the rauenyng wolfe at all tymes, euen so lykewyse, those people that are wythoute a Preacher & teacher of Gods word, runne astray wout order, hear the voyce of euety

Pro. xxix
Math. ix

Mark this comparison

straunger, saull in all kynde of vicious abhominacion, are rent & torne wyth wycked spirites, & redy at euery houre to be swalowed vp of Satan our olde aduersary, whiche sleapeth not, but watcheth diligently, &
1.Pet.v walketh about lyke a rorying Lyon seakyng whome he maye deuoure. Surely great is the damnaciō that hangeth ouer the hedes of these slug gyshe sheppardes. Christ the hyghe
mar.i.iiii preste sayde, *Oportet me euangelizare, nā in hoc missus sum.* I must preach the gospell, saythe he, for I am sent for this purpose. What shall the baser sorte of prestis do than I praye you? shall they lyue in pleasure and idlenes? in delicious fare & sluggyshnes? Doth not *Oportet* also pertayne vnto thē? Certes if they wyll not meddle with *Oportet euangelizare*, they are lyke to haue no parte of *Miserere*. S. Paule also that good Bysshop sayd, *Væ mihi,*

si non

sinō euangelizauero. Wo vnto me, if I preach not the Gospel. And shal our Rabines thynke to escape wythout pouyshment, though they preach no thyng at al? I feare that if they wyl not medle wyth Euangelizare, they are lyke to crye another daye, Væ, Væ, Væ, quantæ sunt tenebræ. Wo, wo, wo, howe great are these darknesses? God the father, God the sonne, God the holy Ghost wythe all the Prophetes and Apostles crye oute vpon prestes for to preache the holy scriptures, exhorting thē to be diligent in that matter. Cry, sayth God the father, cease not. Lyfte vp thy voyce as a trōpe. Esa.lviii Shew the people theyr synnes, and declare vnto them theyr wickednes. Agayne he sayth, O Jerusalem, I Esa haue set watche men vpon thy wanles, they shall not holde theyr peace nether nyght nor daye. Christ sayde to hys Apostles, go thorowe out the 1.Cor.ix

wozld and pzeache the gospel to euery creature. S. Paule saythe, take hede to your selfes and to all ỹ flock, Luke.xxiiii vpon whome the holy Ghoste hathe made you ouersears, to fede the congregacion of God, whom he purchased wyth hys bloud. Foz I knowe ỹ Act.xx after my departure greuous wolfes shall enter in amõg you not sparing the flock. And euen among your selfes shall there aryse men speakynge peruerse thynges, ỹ they maye lede awaye the disciples after thẽ. Therfoze watche, and remember that by the space of thze whole yeares I dyd not cease to monish euery one of you both daye and nyght euen with teares. Agen he sayth, gyue attẽdaunce to thy selfe & to doctrine, continewe in these. Foz if thou doste so, ỹ shalte both saue thy self & them that heare the. Preache the wozd, be feruent be it in tyme oz oute of tyme, repzoue, 1.Ti.iiii. ii. rebuke

rebuke, exhorte wyth all softenes & doctrine. Speke those thynges that become wholesome doctrine. S. Peter also saythe, ye Prestes se that ye fede christes flocke, which is among you, takynge the ouersyght of them not as though ye were cõpelled therto, but wyllyngly, not for the desyre of fylthy lucre, but of a good mynd, not as thoughe ye were Lordes ouer the paryshes, but that ye be an ensãple to the flocke. And whã the chefe shepeheard shall appeare, ye shall receaue an incorruptible Crowne of glory. Titus.ii. 1.Pet.v

These textes of the holy scripture declare manifestly how feruent, busy, studious and diligẽt all true prestes ought to be in the preachyng of Gods worde. The men godly enspired knewe ryght well, that so longe as Goddes worde is preached to the people, it must nedes go well wythe

The preachynge of Gods word causeth ỳ christen religiõ to florysshe

the Chriſten religion, but if it once ceaſe, than farewell all godlyneſſe, farewell all vertue and goodnes. Of thys thynge, alas for pitie, haue we hadde experience many a yere vnto our great diſcomfort, and yet lytyll redreſſe. For many of the prieſtes go forth to be as ſluggyſh as euer they were, neyther haue they ony godly care for Chriſtes flocke cõmitted vn to thẽ. So they maye haue the profytes, they care for no more. *Bonus eſt odor lucri ex re qualibet.* So ỳ by thys meanes the ſhepe are lyke to dye for meate. But alas howe ſhoulde they teach other, whan they them ſelues knowe nothynge. They are euen as the Prophet ſaythe, dumme dogges not once being able to barke. Many agayne of them there are, which are learned, and knowe theyr duty, and yet I knowe not wyth what ſpirite moued they holde theyr peace, they

esa.lvi

ſpeake

speake nothyng, they se theyr shepe runne astraye before theyr faces, walke in all kynde of wyckednes, & yet haue they no pitie. I wonder w what forheades these men wyll appere before the hygh preest and great Iudge Christ at the dredefull day of iudgement. I pray God they be not Epicures bothe in lyuyng & iudgement. But let vs heare what the holy and catholyke Doctors saye vnto thys matter.

S. Jerome sayth, if ony mã wyll be a Bysshop not onely in name but also in deseruynge, let hym followe Moses, and let hym follow Aaron. For what is sayd of them, that they went not from the tabernacle of the Lorde. Ergo Moses was continually in the tabernacle of the Lorde. What busynesse had he there? Verely that ether he shulde lerne somewhat of God, or els teache the peo- In Leuit. Dist. xxxvi. Cã. Siquis.

ple.

The work of a Byſſhop is to ſtudy the holy ſcriptures, purely to preache thē vnto the people, and fervently to praye

ple. Theſe are the two workes of a Byſhop, that he ſhulde learne of god by readyng the diuine ſcriptures & by hauyng hys continuall meditacion in them, or elles teache the people, but yet ought he to teache thoſe thynges, that he had learned of god, and not of his owne harte or mans wiſdome, but thoſe thynges that ẏ holy Ghoſte teacheth. There is another worke alſo that Moſes dothe, he goeth not vnto ẏ warres, he fightethe not agaynſt the enemies, but what doth he? He prayeth. And while he prayethe, hys people ouercommeth, if he do once ſtake & let downe hys hādes, thā are hys people ouercome and chaſed away. Let ẏ preſte of the chyrche therfore praye wythout ceaſyng, that the people, whych are vnder hym, may ouercome ther inuiſible enemies the Amalechites, which are dyuels that do impugne

Exo. xvii.

and

and fyghte agaynst them, that wyll lyue godly in Christ.

O howe true, swete and godly are these wordes of the holye Doctore: Here may al Bysshops & Prestes lern what theyre dutye is, not to be idle, not tohūt & hawk, not to dyse & card not to bācket and lyue voluptuously, not to playe the ruflyng galātes and to be entangled wyth worldely busynesses, but to be continually in the tabernacle of the Lorde, that is to saye, to studye and to haue theyr perpetuall meditacion in the holye scriptures euen both daye & nyght. as Dauid saythe, and wyth all diligence to teache the people committed to theyr Spirituall charge, not mennes tradicions, not theyr owne fantasies, but Goddes moost holye worde, euen the holy scriptures, and suche thynges, wherof ỹ holy Ghost is the Author. Lette them therfore

Learn your dutye here o ye Prestes

Psal.i.

locke

looke well to theyr office. For if they be true Bysshops and Prestes, thys is the worke committed vnto them, euen continually to studye the holy scriptures, and purely to preach thē vnto the people. If they leaue thys office vndone, & do the workes prescribed of man, so do they shewe thē selues to be ỹ seruauntes not of god, but of man. Let thē therfore looke, what answer they wyll make to the hygh Iudge and great preste Christ at the terrible daye of iudgement.

Moreouer it is theyr duty feruētly and wythout ceasyng to pray for the people, that they maye preuayle agaynst Satā & hys ministers that fyght dayly agaynst thē. How colde ỹ prayers of many of thē are, I wyl not now dispute. For they are more open to the whole worlde, than they nede here to be rehersed. Whā Moses held vp hys handes and prayed hys

The prayers of many prestes are colde nowa dayes

hys people dyd ouercome. Whyther our Prelates holde vp theyr handes & praye, as they ought, let other mē iudge. Of this am I ſure, ẏ ſyns the worlde begā, therneuer reigned more ſynne and abhominaciō than there doth at this daye, which is but a clē-der argument that we get the victo-ry of our enemies. God gyue al Byſhoppes and Prelates grace once to looke vpon theyr office diligently, ẏ they maye both earneſtly ſtudye the holy ſcriptures, teache them ſyncer-ly vnto the people, and continually occupy thē ſelfes in feruent prayers. Than ſhal it not only be wel wt Chriſtes flocke, but alſo with them ſelues at the dredefull daye of iudgement, whā they ſhall appere before ẏ hygh Byſhop Jeſus Chriſt, and gyue ac-coūtes vnto hym of theyr behauour in the office that was cōmitted vn-to them in this worlde.

Saynt

In Aggeū Prophetā

S. Austen also sayth, cōsyder that it is the office of prestes, whan they be demaunded of ỹ lawe, to answer. If he be a Preste, let hym knowe the lawe of the Lord, if he knoweth not the lawe of the Lorde, he declarethe euidently that is he is no preste. For it pertayneth vnto ỹ Lordes preste to know the law, and whan he is asked, to make answer of ỹ lawe. Lord be mercifull vnto vs, what wyll a great nomber of our prestes saye to these wordes of S. Austen? I feare moche, that if he were not so afficient a Doctore, and a sayncte all redy approued by the Chyrche, surely many prestes for madnes wolde nothynge feare to accuse hym of heresy, and to affirme that he preacheth heretticall doctrine, so iopardous a thynge at this tyme is it to speake agēst these ignorant Rabines, which although they knowe nothyng, yet wyll they

be

be Judges ouer all menne, and redy streyghtewayes to condemne them. It is not the long robe, the flaryng typpet about the necke, the annoyntynge of the fyngers, the brode shaupnge of the crowne, that maketh the Preste, but knowledge and connynge in the lawe of the Lorde, and so called vnto prestehode. The Prophet Malachy sayth, the lyppes of a Preste kepe knowledge, and at hys mouthe shall they require the lawe, for he is the messanger of the Lorde of Hoostes. So sayth S. Austē here that Prestes ought to be so wel learned in the holy scriptures, that whā ony man demaundeth a question of them concernyng the lawe of God, they shulde be able to answer. If he be a preste, saythe he, let hym knowe the lawe of the Lord. If he knoweth not the lawe of the Lorde, he declareth euidently, that he is no preste.

Malac. ii

Prestes ought to be learned in ỹ law of god

Saynt

Who is a preste after. S. Austēs mind

S. Austen here affyrmethe, that he only is a preste, whyche hath knowledge in the lawe of the Lorde. If there wantethe knowledge, it is an euident argument, sayth he, ẏ there is no Preste. It is happy that saynt Austēis gone and a sayncte. For if he were now alyue & a Byshop agayne, as he was in times paste, and shulde go on visitacion thorow out the dioces, I thynke surely he wold depose a great sorte of Prestes, as mē more fytte for ẏ carte than for the chyrch. For S. Austen measureth all presthode by knowledge. It pertaynethe vnto the Lordes Preste, sayth he, to knowe the lawe, and whan he is demaunded, to make answer of ẏ law.

Obsequiū amicos, veritas odiū parit.

He maye be a Preste of Baal, of the Romysh Byshop, and of man, but of the Lorde he canne not be, excepte he hath knowledge. If ony mā fealethe hym selfe greued at thys matter,

ter, and can not abyde hys scalde & scuruy backe thus to be rubbed, let hym know that they be not my wordes, but the wordes of S. Austen, a man in hys tyme not only godly enspired, and excellently learned, but also of greate authorite before the worlde. I onely reherse hys & other holye Doctores wordes, because I wolde gladly haue men to do truely theyr office, and to set thislayeng of the Psalmograph euer before theyr eyes, Be not lyke a horse & a moyle, whiche haue no vnderstanding. For ignorance in al men is to be abhorred, but in Prestes chefely. Iſ after the mynde of thapostle Paule, sayth S. Jerome, Christ is the power of God, and the wysdom of God, it followeth well, that he that knoweth not the scriptures, knoweth not the power of God and the wysdome of hym. For the ignorance of the scrip-

Psa. xxxi

In Esaiam

Dis.xxxviii Can. Si in laicis.

tures, is the ignorance of Christ. Leo the Bysshop sayth, if ignorance semeth intollerable euen in laye me, how moch more is it worthy nether of excuse nor of forgyuenes in them that beare rule? Therfore desyre all Prestes that be good and vertuous and tender the glorye of God, & the saluacion bothe of theyr owne & other Christen mennes soules, that they wyll not be moued wyth these wordes, whych come from a breall, that wyssheth wel vnto them all, but earnestly looke vpon theyr office better, caste awaye blynde ignorance, study for ỹ knowledge of holy scriptures, and labour wyth all mayne to do that, which God requireth of them.

Ad venantium Episcopum.

Moreouer sayne Gregory sayth, ỹ shepparde, whiche doth not rebuke them that offende, wythout doubte he sleath them by holdyng hys peace

Agayne

Agayne he sayth, we that are called Prestes, besydes these euels that we haue of our own, we adde also other mennes deathes. For we slea so many as we se dayly go vnto deathe, & yet are sluggyshe & holde our peace. Here is terrible sayenge, that they, whiche are appoynted to saue Christen mēnes soules do cruelly slea thē by theyr negligence & holdyng theyr peace. Oh that the Byshops of euery diocesse wold diligently looke vpō thys matter, the easyer much shulde be theyr accountes at the dredefull daye of iudgement. The holy Ghost mought breth it into theyr myndes. In Ezech hom. xi

In concilio toletano we reade on thys manner, Ignoraunce the mother of all errours is moost of all to be exchewed in the Prestes of God, whyche haue taken vpon them the office of teachyng among the people of God. Prestes are warned to rede Dis. xxxviii Can. Ignorantia.

the holye scriptures, as Paule tha-
1. Tim. iiii. postle sayth vnto Timothe, gyue attendaunce to readyng, & exhortacio & lernyng, & continew alway in these. Let Prestes therfore know ỳ holy scriptures and canons, and lette all theyr worke, busines and trauayle consist in preachyng and doctrine, & let them edify all men so well with the knowledge of fayth, as wyth the good information of workes. O godly decree. Here maye all prestes learne, that theyr worke doth consist in preachyng and doctrine, in edifiyng the people and in giuing them godly examples of vertuous lyuynge. God sende vs mo suche councels.

Dist. xliii. Can. Dispensatio.

Bysshop Nicolas wryteth on this maner, the distribucion of the heauenly seed is enioyned vs. Wo therfore be vnto vs, if we do not spryncle it abrode. Wo be vnto vs, if we holde our peace. Here is eternall da-

nation

nacion threteneth prestes, if they do not sowe abrode the heauenly seed of Goddes worde in the feldes of christen mennes hartes. Let them looke well to theyr office, for they stond in a perrillous state. Many of them thynche it a great pleasure to receaue yerely so great profites of theyr benefices, but let them remēber the commō prouerbe, swete meate must haue sower sawce. Wo be to you, sayth Christ, that laughe nowe, for ye shall mourne & wepe. Wo be to you that are fylled, for ye shall honger. Wo be to you rytthe menne, whiche haue your consolaciō. Wo be to you, whan all men prayse you. Luke.vi

Platina in the lyfe of Bysshop Innocentius the fyrst, wryteth on this manner: Innocentius the fyrst dyd not gyue the ecclesiastical benefices but vnto such prestes, as ware tho rowly proued & tryed both in lyfe & Platina.

Wold god we had no such Innocentes

learnyng. And he made a constitucio that all prelates and so many as had benefices shuld go home to their owne Paryshes vnder payne of cursyng. For he sayd, that no hyrelyng but the very owne shepparde ought to kepe his owne shepe. Here was a wonderfull godly constitucio. Wolde god it were obserued thorow out all Christendome. Than shuld Christes flocke be muche better fed than they are at this tyme. Than shulde not ỹ Parsons & Vicars be ablet fro their benefices as they are now a dayes. Than shuld ỹ goodes of ỹ Paryshes be spent amonge the Paryshners, & not abrode as they be now a dayes, no man can tell where about. Than shuld the poore people be better looked vpon. Than shulde Prestes be more diligent to mayntayne hospitalite. Than shuld the beneficed me more quietly applye their myndes vnto

vnto the study of holy scriptures & other godly medi:tacõs. Thã shulde seruent loue, which is now almoost vniuersally decayed, spryng vp new agayne betwene the prestes and the laye men. Than shulde prestes be honored as fathers, and laye men coũt thẽ selues as theyr chyldren, gyuing them reuerence and double honour as the scripture commaũdeth. Thã shulde Gods worde florysh, and the glorye of God be sought of all men. Why shall we not once se thys ioyfull daye in Englande? Whan myght it euer be broughte to passe better and more conuenietly, than nowe vnder this our moost excellẽt kyng, which hytherto hath so bothe godly & prosperously lyke another Ezechias trauayled in the byldyng agayn of our Lorde Gods temple, in throwynge downe the workes of Hypocrisy, superstition, and Idolatry, and in set-

1. Tim. v

tyng

tynge by agayne the pure and Chri-
sten religion: Lorde, graunt that it
maye come to passe, yea & ỹ shortly.

Prestes must both preach syncerly, & also lyue godlye Luk. iiii.

Thus se we both by the holy scrip-
tures, the auncięt Doctors, and the
godly olde councels, how greatly all
Bysshoppes and Prestes ought to be
occuppyed in studyēg and preachyng
Goddes worde. But to thys theyr
godly preachyng they must also ioyne
a vertuous and pure lyfe, vnlesse
they edify not so muche wyth theyr
preachynge, as they destroye wythe
theyr wycked lyuyng. It is a shame
for a Phisicīō to be so spotted & pocky,
that it shall maye iustly be sayde
to him, Phisicīō heale thy selfe. God
sayde to the synner, sayth the Psal-
mographe, why dooste thou preache
my lawes, and take my Testament
in thy mouth: Thou haste hated to
be reformed, and thou haste caste a-
waye my wordes behynde the. Al ỹ

Psal. xlix

sawes

sawest a thefe, thou rannest wͭ hym, and wythe adulterers dyddest thou laye thy porcion. Thy mouth dydde abound wyth cursed speakyng, and thy tonge dyd couple craftely togyther deceates. Thou dyddest sytte, & speake agaynst thy brother, & agēst thy mothers sonne dyddest thou lay a stomblyng blocke. These thynges haste thou done, and yet haue I holdē my peace. Thou wyckedly thoghtest, that I wolde be lyke vnto the, but I wyll reproue the, & come face to face agaynst the. O vnderstonde these thynges, ye that forget God, vnlesse he plucke you awaye, & there be none ẏ can delyuer you. Sayncte Paule also sayth, thou that teachest another, teachest not thy self. Thou that preachest that men shulde not steale, stealest thy selfe. Thou that sayste that whoredome shulde not be committed, playest the whoremon- Rom. ii.
ger

ger thy selfe. Thou that abhorrest Images, robbest God of his honour thy selfe. Thou that glorysest of the lawe, thorowe breakyng of the law, dishonorest God. For ꝑ name of God is euell spoken of among the Gentiles thorowe you.

Of these thynges it is euident, ꝑ it is not sufficient for prestes to preache Goddes worde, except they also leade a vertuous & godly lyfe. Who so euer doth and teacheth, he shal be called great in the kyngdom of heauen, sayth the scripture. Christ doth not onely call prestes the salte of the earth, but also the lyght of ꝑ world. Wythe theyr preachyng they season the people, but wythe theyr lyght of godly conuersacion they shewe men howe they ought towalke and lyue. Therfore immediately is it subioyned, lette your lyght so shyne before menne, that they maye se your good

Math. v.

Prestes are not only called the salte of ꝑ earthe, but also the lyght of the worlde

workes,

workes & glorify your father, which is in heauen. Be an example of the faythfull, sayth Paule, in worde, in conuersacion, in loue, in Spirite, in faythe. Kepe thy selfe pure. Study to shewe thy selfe commendable to God, a worke man that neadeth not to be ashamedde. He that preacheth Christ, sayth S. Ambrose, ought to shewe hym selfe wholly estraunged from all kynde of vices. S. Johñ Chrisostome also sayth, it is a great shame for Prestes, and for so many as be of the Clergy, whan laye men be founde faythfuller & more ryghteous than they are? Howe canne it otherwyse be than a shame for them to be inferioure to the laye people, whome to be lyke vnto them, it is also a shame? Agē. S. Gregory sayth, the lyght of the flocke is the flame of the shepparde. For it becōmethe the Lordes shepehearde and a Preste to

i. Tim. iiii.
i. Tim. o
ii. Tim. ii

In serm. de ieiunio.

In Math.

In Pastora

shyne

shyne in manners and lyuyng, that in hym as in ỳ glalle of theyr lyght, the people that is committed vnto hym maye bothe discerne what they shulde follow, and also se what they shulde correcte and amende. Hereof is it euident, what great purite and innocency of lyfe ought to be in prestes, that theyr lyfe may correspond and in all poyntes answere to theyr preachyng.

But here is an answer to be made to the vnsauery talke of certen men nowe a dayes, which because they se the manners of the Preachers not agreable in all poyntes to theyr sermons, faull at defyaunce with gods worde, blaspheme it as heresy, rayle vpon the preachers and absent them selfes from the hearyng of all godly exhortacions, warnynges and counsels. These parsons hynder no man so moche as them selfes. They may well

well be compared to a folysshe man, Mark well
whyche cometh vnto the market for
to bye meate. But whā he beholdeth
the butcher, and perceaueth hym to
haue some deformite in his face, as
one of his eyes to be out, or to be bal-
de, or elles to holde his necke awrye,
gothe streyght home agayne, & cho-
sethe rather to dye for honger, than
he wyll bye meate of suche a butcher
although the meat be neuer so pure, Math. xxiii
clene, commestible & wholsome. But
let vs heare what the holy scripture
saythe. In the chayer of Moses syt
Scribes and Phareses. All therfore
that they commaunde you to kepe,
loke that you kepe and do, but accor-
dyng to theyr workes do ye not. For
they say, but they do not. Here christ
commaundethe vs not to abstayne
from the hearyng of Goddes worde,
though they be neuer so wicked and
euyll, that preache it. For who were
more

more vngodly, and greater enemies to Chryst, than the Scribes & Phareses, yet Chryst commaundethe to heare them so longe as they sytte in the chayer of Moses. To syt in the chayer of Moses is truely & syncerly to preach those thynges that Moses dyd, to enterpret the lawe accordyng to the ryght vayne of the holy scripture, and only to seake the glory of God & the profyt of the faythfull. So long as they that are preachers do thys, they are to be heard, though theyr lyfe be neuer so abhominable. For it is not the preacher, to whome we must haue pryncipall respecte, but to the word of God. Nether do we come into the Temple to gase vpon the Preacher, but to hear the holy scriptures declared, and so lerne to lede a godly lyfe. If he were one of the ministers of Satan, yea Satan hymselfe that preacheth, so

What it is to syt in the chayer of Moyses

longe as he bryngethe in *Scriptum est*, so long as he teacheth purely the diuine scripture wythout wreastyng or corruptynge of the same, he is to be hearde. We ought not so greatly to marke the teacher, as that which is taught. If he teachethe well, it is ours, & we haue that we came for, if he lyueth well, it is his owne, and he shal receaue the rewarde. But lette vs heare what Chrisostome sayth to thys matter. If the prestes lyue wel sayth he, it is theyr auauntage, but if they teache well, it is yours. Be not curio⁹ to boulte out that, which pertayneth vnto another man. For oftentymes good learnyng comethe forthe from an euyll manne, as vyle earth bryngeth forth precious gold. Is precious golde despysed for the vile earth? Therfore as the golde is chosen, and the earth forsakē, so lyke wyse take you the learnyng, & leaue the

Euerye mā ẏ preachethe ẏ scripture trulye is to be hearde, be hys lyfe neuer so wycked.

In Math Cap. xxiii.

the manners. Agayne he sayethe, let vs take the doctrine but not the mā ners. Herbes are not necessary for the bees, but the floures are. So you lykewyse gather the flourres of doc trine, and leaue theyr fashons of ly uyng. Here this holy Doctor wyl leth vs not to despyse ỹ word, thou ghe the Preacher be euell. Lette vs take that is oures, and let go that is hys. The doctrine is oures, ỹ lyfe is hys I had rather haue a synner preacher of Gods worde, which shal declare Christ vnto me purely, re buke my synful lyuyng, comfort me wyth the swete promises of GOD, shewe me howe I ought to institute my lyfe according to ỹ wyl of god. & although hys māners be somewhat corrupte and dissent from his pre chyng, thā to haue a wicked Papist, a pestilēt Pharese & a superstitious Hypocrite, whiche shall outwardely

lyke

lyke a crafty lore pretēd a certayne
grauite, and a popeholy manner of
lyuynge, and yet corrupte the holye
scriptures, confounde Gods worde
wyth mens tradicions, lede the peo-
ple into superstticious errours, flat-
ter the herers, preach for lucre, mā-
kle the doctrine of Christ, & obscure
the waye of trueth. Of suche Christ
warneth vs to take hede in the Gos-
pell of Mathew, sayeng, Beware of Math. vii
false Prophetes, whiche come vnto
you in shepes clothyng, but inward
ly they are rauening wolues. Agenst
these Christ in another place thonde Matth. xxiii
reth, sayeng, wo be to you Scribes
and Phareses, hypocrites, for ye are
lyke paynted sepulchres, which out-
wardly appere beautifull, but with-
in are full of bones of dead men and
of all fylthynes. So ye lykewyse ap
pere outwardely ryghteous to me,
but inwardly ye are full of hypocri-

sye and wyckednes. Agayne, ye are they, that iustify your selfes before mē, but God knoweth your hartes. For that whyche semeth prayse worthy before men, is abhominable before God. Therfore so long as ẏ preacher sytteth in the chayer of Moses, and not in the chayer of pestilēce, he is to be hearde for the wordes sake, be hys lyfe neuer so wycked & vngodly. Notwythstondyng I exhorte all Christen Preachers, and so many as vnfaynedly tender the glory of god, and the promociō of hys moost blyssed worde, that they do theyr endeuour not only to set forthe Goddes trueth in worde & tonge, but also in worcke and verite. Let them be the same in lyfe, ẏ they professe in word. For he takethe vpon hym the name of a Christen man in vayne, saythe sayncte Austen, that followethe not Christ. For what dothe it profyt the

Luke. xvi. Psal. i.

Cura esse quod lubēter audis.

to

to be called that thou arte not, & to vsurpe a straunge name? If ỹ haste a pleasure to be a Christen man, do those thynges that pertayne vnto Christianite, and than hardely take vpon the the name of a Christiane. Lib. de doctrina christiana.

S. Ambrose also sayth, it is a shamefull lye before ony man to call hymselfe a Christen man, & not to do the workes of Christ. Hereto ꝓtaynethe the sayeng of S. Cypriane, no man is truely called a Christiane, but he whyche laboureth, so moche as lyghteth in hys power, to shewe hymselfe conformable & lyke to Christ in hys maners & conuersacion. He ỹ sayth, ỹe dwelleth in Christ, saithe. Joh̄. ought to walke as he hathe walked. In Ser. de Abraham. De. xii. abusionibus. 1. Joan. ii.

Seyng than that so great purite and innocency of lyfe is requyred of all men that profesle Christ, surely in Prestes and in thē that are preachers of Gods worde, it ought to excell Mathy. v.

cell aboue all other. Men lyght not a candle, and put it vnder a bushel, but vpon a candlestycke, & it shyneth to so many as are in the house. So lykewyse Prestes are not called vnto the office of preachyng, that theyr conuersacion shulde be darke and wout lyght, but that it shuldbe so garnyshed wyth godly vertues & good workes, that it myghte lyghte to so many as are in the house of God. Christ the hygh preste & euerlastyng Bysshoppe graunt it maye so be.

But as I may returne vnto our matter of swearynge, let them that be Preachers, I say, aboue all thynges rebuke this abhominable synne of swearyng, & declare vnto the people what a great offence it is, & howe the plages of God and hys vengeaūs shal not departe from the houses of them, that vse thys moost detestable synne of swearyng.

Furthermore let all fathers and mothers gyue earnest diligẽce that theyr chyldren maye from theyr bery cradles learne to worshypps and honour ỹ mooste blyssed name of god, and neuer to haue it in theyr mouthes wythout great reuerence done vnto it, eyther by puttynge of theyr cappes or elles by boweynge theyr knees. Let them not be suffred by o ny meanes to sweare by God or by onye of hys creatures, but let your cõmunicacion be yea, yea, nay, nay. If they at onye tyme sweare, lette them fyrste of all be admonysshed of theyr faute, and tolde how great an offẽce it is before God wyckedly and vaynely to sweare. If they wyll not so amende, let the parentes ponysshe them sharpely. Better were it, that theyr bodyes in thys worlde shulde suffer a lytyll payne, than after this lyfe to haue bothe theyr bodyes and soules

Fathers & mothers

Math. v
Jacob. v

soules caste into hell fyre. If all fathers and mothers wyl thus diligētly watche vpon theyr chyldrē, it shal cause them not only not to be defyled wythe the moost greuous synne of swearing, but also that the moost holy name of GOD shall be had in hygh reuerence, great estimacion & perpetuall honoure for euer after so longe as they lyue. But aboue all thynges lette the parentes them selues be an ensample in thys behalfe vnto theyr chyldren, and shewe euermore such reuerence vnto the name of God, that the yonglynges maye well perceaue, that it is no vayne thyng, that they are taught.

Masters & mastresses

Let all masters and mastresses & so many as haue seruauntes vnder theyr dominion, prouyde that by no meanes they suffer theyr seruaūtes at ony tyme to swear nether by god nor by ony of his creatures. Let thē

shewe

shewe vnto them what a great dan- Eccle. xxii.
ger it is, and howe that the vengeaūs of God shall not departe from those houses, where swearers are, nether can there ony thyng prosper, but all thynges must nedes go to hauocke. Let them also teache them to haue the name of God in so great honour & reuerence, that it neuer be named among them but honorably and reuerently. Let them at the least put of theyr cappes so ofte as they name God, Christ, or ony part of his moste precious bodye. If ony of theyr seruauntes wyll not leaue theyr swearynge, and learne to haue the name of God in honoure, than let them be put out of theyr houses, vnlesse they bryng the vengeaunce of God vpon so many as are in theyr compaiy.
For as the godlynesse of one man is Nota.
many tymes thoccasiō, that God is mercyful to many, so is the wycked-

nes of one man oftentymes ꝙ cause ꝙ many are punyshed. Therfore it is not ynoughe that the maisters & the maistresses of the house be vertuous and godly, excepte the seruauntes be so lykewyse. It becommeth a maister to haue Seruauntes lyke vnto hys owne manners, vnlesse his goodnes profyteth not so moche in the ryght institucion of hys family, as ꝙ wyckednes of the other destroyeth. It is well, whan one plantethe & another waterethe, but it is euyll, whan one planteth and another plucketh vp. Myne eyes are vnto the faythful of the earthe, that they maye dwell w̄ me, sayth Dauid, and who so ledeth a godly lyfe shall be my seruaunte. There shall no disceatfull parsonne dwell in my house, he that telleth lyes shall not tary in my syght. Wolde God all maisters were of this mynde.

Psal. c

What seruauntes christē me oughte to haue

Lette

Let all mē of occupaciō abſtayne from ſwearyng in theyr byynge and ſellynge. For it is a ſhame, that the mā of God ſhulde be eſtemed among Chriſten men of ſo ſmall pryce, that for the valoure of a lytyll temporall auauntage and worldely lucre, men ſhulde abuſe it and vaynely take it. Wo be to that man, whyche for hys owne priuate lucre dothe blaſpheme the name of God, or ony of hys creatures. There oughte to be ſo great ſincerite and fayth among Chriſten men, that there ſhulde nede no othes in theyr bargaynes and worldly buſineſſes. A Chriſten mannes worde oughte to be better and ſurer than ony obligaciō. God graunt that we maye once ſe thys come to paſſe in Englonde. Men of occupation

Let them that ſweare, becauſe it is the cuſtome ſo to do, leaue theyr ſwearyng, and no more followe the wycked Swearers of cuſtome

wycked custome, but the truethe of Gods worde, whiche saythe, sweare not at all. Let your communicaciō be yea, yea, naye, naye.

Math. v.

Swearers for pryde.

Lette them that glory & reioyse so muche in theyr swearyng, that they wyll take vpon them to mayntayne it by ẏ scripture, abstayne frō theyr idle oothes, and wreaste no more the holy scripture, vnlesse they folowing the manners of Satā, receaue a rewarde worthy theyr wyckednesse.

Math. iiii

Swearers meanynge no euyll.

Math. xiii

Swearers ẏ they may be beleued.

Let them that saye, though they sweare, yet we thyncke no harme, leaue theyr swearyng and remember that they shall gyue accoustes at the dredeful daye of iudgement for euery idle word that they haue spoken, so that they shall not escape vnponished for theyr idle oothes.

Let them that saye, fewe or none wyll beleue vs, except we sweare, rather meddle wyth fewe or none, thā

they

they shuld transgresse the commaũdement of God, & bryng damnacion vpon theyr owne heades.

To conclude, let all oothes be taken away from the myndes of Christen menne, excepte they be taken for those causes, whiche I haue expressed before. If we wyll thꝰ do, we shal easely exchewe the moost detestable vice of periury, and frendely lyue together in all truethe, sincerite and fayth, as it becomethe saynctes, & so many as professe Christ. For he that wyll not sweare, wyll not lyghtelye falsely sweare, and be forsworne.

And that we maye be the more encouraged to forsake all vayne & idle oothes, let vs remember, that God, which is ỹ euerlastyng truthe, hath promised, that he wyll glorify them, whiche honoure hym and haue hys name in reuerence: Agen, that they shall come vnto dishonour & a shame

The conclusion of the booke

full

full ende, that despyse hym and blaspheme hys moost holye name. Nowe if we wyll that God glorify vs, that is to saye, be our good Lord, defend preserue, kepe & gouerne vs, blysse vs, lyghten hys gracious coũtenãs vpon vs, sende vs all thynges necessary for our lyuynge in this present worlde, and after thys lyfe gyue vs eternall glory: than is it conuenient that we do not abuse ẏ name of god by our vayne & vnrighteous othes, but alwayes laude, prayse, cõmend, magnify & blysse it, caull vpon it, fly vnto it as vnto an holye anchore in all our aduersite, and neuer to haue in our mouthes, but wythe hygh reuerence and great honour. If we do the contrary, ẏ is to saye, blaspheme hys moost holy name, than shall we vndoubtedly come vnto dishonoure & a shamefull ende. In thys worlde the plage and vẽgeaũce of God shall not

Godtoglorify vs what it is

What euylles shall chaunse vnto vs, if we vaynly swere?

not go awaye from oure houses, we shal be stryken wyth many greuous diseases in our bodyes, oure goodes and cattell, yea and all that euer we haue shal come to noght, our kynde of lyuyng shall be despysed wyth all good men, our death shall be paynefull, miserable and wretched, & after these so great and manifold plages, we maye be sure for our wycked swerynge to be cast into hell fyre, where the flames of it shall neuer be quenched, where wepyng and gnashyng of tethe shall be, where the worme ỹ shall gnawe oure consciences shall neuer dye. Esa.lxvi. Math.xxiii

Therfore I beseche al Christen mē by the tender mercyes of God and by the mooste precious bloud of oure sauiour Jesus Christ, wherby alone we are redemed, made pure, and deliuered from al our synnes, that they from henseforth leaue theyr abhominable

nable swearyng ether by God or by ony of hys creatures. Let them neuer take God to wytnes, excepte it be in a necessarye and earneste matter, I meane suche a matter as maketh vnto the glorye of God. Let theyr cõmunicacion be yea, yea, nay naye. Let so great syncerite, truthe, and layth reygne among thẽ, that one maye beleue another wythoute an oothe, euen by a worde. Let thẽ haue God in suche reuerẽce and honoure, and so order theyr tonges in thys worlde, vnto the glory of God, that after this lyfe thorowe the mercy of God they maye be found worthy to be in the nomber of those blissed spirites, which without ceasyng syng perpetual prayses to the moste holy name of God on thys maner:

Apoca. xv. Apoca. iiii. Great and marueilous are thy workes, O Lorde God almyghty, ryghteous & true are thy wayes, o kynge

of

of saynctes. Who shall not feare the, O Lorde, and magnifye thy name? For thou arte worthy, O Lorde, to take the glory and honour, & power, for thou haste made al thynges, and for thy wyll they are and were made. To him that sytteth in the throne, and to the lambe, be blyssynge, and honour, and glory & power worldes wout end. Amē. Apoca. v.

¶ Saye not but that ye are warned.

¶ Gyue the glory to God alone.

The Inuectyue

Actes agaynst customable swearers made in tymes past by dyuers excellent Pryn-ces, and theyr honorable councell.

Kynge Henry the fyfte.

Kynge Henry the fyfte made a statute for swearers in his owne Palace, yf he were a Duke ydyd swere, he should forfyt for euery tyme xl.s. to the aydyng of poore people. If he were a Lorde or Barone. xx.s If he were a Knyght or an Esquyer x.s. If he were a yeman. xl.d. If he were a Page or a Lackey, or a slaue, to be scourged naked eyther wyth a rodde or els wyth a whyppe.

Vvalde-mus in quo dam sermo ne.

Mo lde god thys statu-te were ob-serued and kept i now adayes, not only in the courte but also thorow out Englōd

Kynge Edmunde.

Kynge Edmūde made thys law, that they, whyche were proued, once falsly forsworne, should for euer de seperated frō Gods cōgregaciō.

Do.

¶ Donaldus Kynge of Shottes.

DOnaldus Kynge of Shottes made thys acte wtin hys lond, that all Periurers & common ſwearers ſhulde haue theyr lippes ſeared wyth a burnyng whot yron.

Hector Botius in hiſtoria Scotorum.

¶ Sayncte Lodowycke Kynge of Fraunce.

THys lawe aforſayd dyd Saynt Lodowycke Kynge of Fraunce enacte alſo, and put it once in execuciõ at Paris vpon a Cytezyn there for blaſphemyng the name of Chriſt vnto the exãple of other, and ſo cauſed it to be proclamed thorowe oute hys Realme for a generall ponyſhement.

A godly proclamacion god ſend v many ſuch

¶ Philip Kynge of Fraunce.

PHilippe Kyng of Fraũce, whom ſo euer he perceaued to blaſpheme the name of God eyther in Tauerne, or ony where els, yea although

Vincētius in ſpeculo hiſtoriali.

he were a great man of dignite, commaunded, that he ſhuld be drowned. And cauſed a ſtrōge acte to be made of it a lytle before hys death, & lefte it vnto hys ſucceſſours.

¶ Philippe Earle of Flaunders.

Iacobus Mayer⁹ in chronicis Flādriæ.

PHilip Earle of Flaunders made thys conſtitucion wythin hys Earledome in the yere of our Lorde M.CCxxviij. that he that dydde forſweare hymſelfe, ſhuld looſe hys lyfe and goodes.

¶ Maximilianus the Emperour.

In Paralip. rerū memorabilium.

MAximilianus the Emperoure made alſo a decre, that who ſo euer he were, that was a comō ſwearer, ſhulde for the fyrſte tyme looſe a marke. And if he were not content wyth that, he ſhulde looſe his heade, whyche acte he & the nobilite of the Empyre commaunded to be publyſhed

shed foure tymes in the yere, at Easter, Whytsondaye, Assumpcion of our Lady and Chrystmas.

¶ The councell of Josephus.

The councel of Josephus is this that he, which blaspheməth god & vnreuerently vse his name, shulde be stoned vnto deathe, and than hãged vp by the space of one daye, and so taken downe, and buryed woute all manner of honour. Lib. iiii. Antiq. Cap. vi.

Diuers other moost noble Princes made diuers other moolte holye lawes, for the erchewing of customable swearyng & Periury. Wolde god that theyse theyr moost godly actes myght ether be renued among christen men, or elles some other deuised for the abolyshyng and puttynge awaye of the moost wycked and detestable custome of swearynge, euery Prynce as he shall thynke moost cõueniẽt for the state of hys Realme.

Lawes are made, and penaltees appoynted for diuers meane thynges, whiche only concerne worldly matges, why than do not Chriſtē Pryn-ces also make lawes, actes and decre es for ẏ glory of god, ẏ hisname may be had in honour & reuerēce as moſt worthy of all it is? Worldlye matters maye not so be eſtemed, ẏ thynges pertaynynge vnto the glorye of God and the ſaluacion of Chriſten mennes ſoules ſhall be neglected.

For rulares are appoynted of God not only to looke vpon mundayne & worldly, but alſo diuine & ſpirituall matters. And it is theyr duty no les to tender the glory of GOD, and to make actes cōcernyng the ſame, thē to ſe that publique tranquilite & all thynges decent & comely for an honeſt outward order be mayntayned, preſerued & kepte. And as they are the ſupreme heades & chefe Rulars

bothe

both of ẏ Spiritualte & Tēporalte, so ought they to trauayle no lesse in spiritual thā in tēporalmatters. Loke what enormities, wyckednesses, vngodly customes, supersticious vnrighteous manners. &c. reygne in Realmes, all these ought to be abolyshed and put away by the terrene Potentates and earthely Rulars. God graūt that we maye se it shortely, not only in thys Realme, but in the kyngedomes of so many as professe Christ. AMEN.

¶ Remedies agaynst swearyng.

If thou be bent to leaue the wycked custome of swearynge, fyrste praye feruentely vnto God, that he wyl take away that thy hart, which is defyled on suche sorte, & so hardened wythe the customable vsage of synnyng, that there canne enter no

vertue nor godlynes into it.

Secōdly desyre hym for hys great mercies sake to create in the a newe harte, & to poure hys spirite so abundantly into thy breste, that by the influence of it, thou mayste be able to dryncke in vertue, and all that euer shalbe plesaūt to the diuine mateste.

Thyrdly be so ast defyaunce wyth all vice & synne, that by no meanes at any tyme thou haue pleasure eyther to thynke, heare or talke of it, so farre let it be from the to medle ony thyng at all wit in thought, worde or dede.

Rede the thirde chapter of S. Iames Epistle.

Forthely let thys sayeng of Christ euer before thyne eyes, that at the daye of iudgement accōptes shall be gyuē of euery idle worde, that is spoken. Thys shall bryng vnto thy remembraunce, howe greuous accoūtes shal be required of them, ỳ customably sweare, vaynely vsurpe the

name

name of God, blaſpheme GOD, be falſly forſworne. &c.

Fyftly, that thou mayſt the more eaſly eſchewe ſwearyng, flye the cõpany of them, that vſe cuſtomably to ſweare, or haue a pleaſure to enterlace theyr talke wt blaſphemous oothes. And what ſoeuer thou hateſt in other, looke that by no meanes thou doeſte the ſame.

Syrrely, buſy thy ſelfe cõtinually in gyuyng prayes vnto God, and in ſettyng forth the glory of his name. Delyght thou in no thyng ſo moch, as in doynge thoſe thynges, ỹ make vnto the auauncemẽt of the diuine mateſte. This ſhal not a lyttyll make vnto ỹ depoſiciõ of ſwering, & make the to haue a mouth, whiche ſhall be the organ and inſtrument of the holy Ghoſt, to ſette forthe and publyſh the glory of God.

Finally, let nothyng come forthe

ok thy mouthe, vntyll it be thorow ly sodde in thy breste, as *Epictetus* the Greke Philosopher warneth, and so order both thy tong and thyn actes in all thy conuersacio, that it neuer repente the afterwarde of onye thynge that thou haste done. So shalte thou not only eschew the dãnable custome of swearynge, but also garnysh thy lyfe wyth all kynde of vertues vnto the great glory of God and the healthe of thy soule. So be it.

TELOS.

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